

Administrative Office of the Courts



INVESTIGATION SUMMARY, DETERMINATION, PROBABLE CAUSE REVIEW, AND RECOMMENDATION REPORT

Complaint Nos. 23-D036 through 23-D038

School Nos. [REDACTED]

07/24/2025

Certification and Licensing Division

**ARIZONA SUPREME COURT
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
INVESTIGATION SUMMARY, DETERMINATION, PROBABLE
CAUSE REVIEW, AND RECOMMENDATION REPORT**

CERTIFICATE HOLDER INFORMATION	Certificate Holders:	Drive Safe AZ Traffic School Stop and Go Traffic School Stop and Go Defensive Driving
	School Numbers:	██████████
	Type of Certificates:	Defensive Driving Schools
COMPLAINANT	Name:	Karen Rushing
INVESTIGATION INFORMATION	Complaint Number:	23-D036, 23-D037, 23-D038
	Investigator:	Shaun Baland
Complaint Received:		11/08/2023
Complaint Forwarded to the Certificate Holders:		12/29/2023
Response from Certificate Holders:		02/02/2024
Period of Active Certification:		School No. █████: 12/09/2016 - Present
		School No. █████ 08/18/2016 - Present
		School No. █████ 08/18/2016 - Present
Status of Certifications:		Active
Availability of Certificate Holders:		Available
Availability of Complainant:		Available
Report Date:		07/24/2025

ALLEGATIONS:

1. School Nos. █████ are not in compliance with the interactive format of ACJA § 7-205.

SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATIVE PROCEDURE:

- Written complaint and documentation submitted by Karen Rushing (“Rushing”).
- Written response/documentation submitted by defensive driving school manager Patty Ryon (“Ryon”) for School Nos. █████ (“Schools”).
- Review of applicable Certification and Licensing Division (“Division”) records.
- Review of applicable sections of Arizona Revised Statutes (“A.R.S.”), Arizona Codes of Judicial Administration (“ACJA”) § 7-201 and § 7-205, and Arizona Supreme Court Rules.
- School Nos. █████ websites.

INTERVIEWS:

1. Patty Ryon

SUMMARY OF FACTUAL FINDINGS OF INVESTIGATION:

23-D036 - Drive Safe AZ Traffic School, School No. [REDACTED]
23-D037 - Stop and Go Traffic School, School No. [REDACTED]
23-D038 - Stop and Go Defensive Driving, School No. [REDACTED]

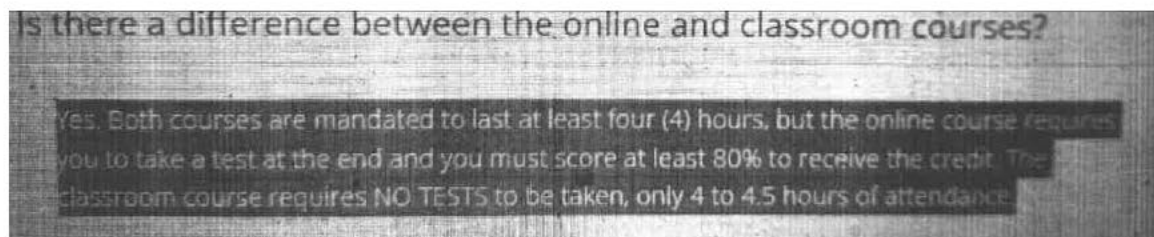
The listed defensive driving schools are owned by Joe and Jan Zahara. In lieu of three individual investigation summaries, the Division has organized these complaints by the individual complaint numbers assigned to each defensive driving school and will present the findings of the investigation in this single investigation summary.

The Division did not substantiate Allegation 1.

ALLEGATION 1: School Nos. [REDACTED] are not in compliance with the interactive format of ACJA § 7-205.

On 11/08/2023, the Division received a written complaint from Rushing alleging that School Nos. [REDACTED] were not in compliance with the definition of “Interactive Format” according to ACJA § 7-205.

As supporting documentation, Rushing attached screenshots taken from the Schools’ respective websites’ “FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS” sections which listed a course review exam, with students needing at least 80% to receive course completion credit.



Comment

The online course requires you to take a test at the end and you must score at least 80% to receive the credit.

The Division reviewed the respective websites. The image below is from the Drive Safe AZ Traffic School website. This image is consistent in all three schools' websites. The Schools have changed the exam scoring text from '80%' to '100%' since the filing of the complaint)

Is there a difference between the online and classroom courses? ^

Yes. Both courses are mandated to last at least four (4) hours, but the online course requires you to take a test at the end and you must score at least 100% to receive the credit. The classroom course requires NO TESTS to be taken, only 4 to 4.5 hours of attendance.

The Division notes that Rushing declined to be interviewed by the Division.

The Division received an initial written response to the complaint from Ryon, general manager for the Schools. Ryon stated that the 80% scoring as listed in the complaint existed due to a "system glitch." She clarified that the Schools now all list 100% as the required score for course completion.

The response to the complaint did not provide details about the exam itself or whether it replaced the code-required section exams needed to advance from segment to segment in the online course. The Division notes that a 'final exam' or 'course completion exam' is not required by code.

The Division interviewed Ryon. She provided the following clarifying information:

- While the curricula vary from school to school, the courses for the Schools are all similarly organized, with consistent website layout and testing processes. The Frequently Asked Questions are consistent for the Schools.
- The Schools include a short course review exam that required 100% to complete the course. The 80% mark as noted in the complaint was due to a system glitch when the website was backed up from an earlier version. The glitch was corrected shortly after the complaint was filed.
- The course review exam does not replace the section exams. Students are required to correctly answer three section questions correctly in order to advance to the next course section.

- The course review exam consists of ten questions, all from the previously completed section exams. Ryon estimated the exam to take less than five minutes to complete.
- The curriculum was designed by owner Jan Zahara. Ryon was unsure why Zahara wanted a course review exam at the end of the course.
- The course review exam cannot be failed. When a question is answered incorrectly, students are prompted to select a different answer until the correct answer is selected. Ryon added this is similar to the section review questions that allow a student to advance in the course.
- Identity verification questions pop up randomly throughout the course also if cursor movement does not occur for 30 seconds to ensure the proper student is taking the course. In the event an exam is paused due to a student missing identify verification questions, they are prompted to contact the school for phone verification. Upon verification, the student may resume the course.

ACJA § 7-201(E)(1)(K) outlines the driving course curriculum requirements.

This section states “*an ADM or traditional school may require a student to complete a course content review.*” This section language does not specify whether ‘course content review’ may include a final exam. The exam includes previously covered course content and is not designed to allow a student to fail the course.

Although Rushing alleged that the Schools were not in compliance with the interactive format, the supporting documentation she provided in the complaint reflects concerns that the Schools conditioned or required a pass/fail ratio of 80% to successfully complete the course. When the Schools received a copy of the complaint, the Schools independently changed the information on the website to amend the 80% to 100%.

The Division’s investigation determined that the Schools, consistent with ACJA §7-205(F)(24)(d)(5)(n), require students to correctly answer three substantive questions concerning the segment just completed before the student can proceed to the next segment. However, the review exam at the end of the course that the Schools include is unnecessary and redundant. Students advance through defensive driving course by way of correctly answering substantive questions at the end of each segment as a condition of advancement to the next segment. Therefore, the review exam serves no useful function given that students can only successfully move through each chapter by correctly answering questions and once they get to the end, they have successfully completed the course, provided that the verification identification process was successful.

The Schools should reconsider the utility of the review exam going forward. In addition, the Schools must modify or remove the information as it currently appears in the Frequently Asked Questions portion of the respective websites’ which, to date, reads:

Is there a difference between the online and classroom courses? ^

Yes. Both courses are mandated to last at least four (4) hours, but the online course requires you to take a test at the end and you must score at least 100% to receive the credit. The classroom course requires NO TESTS to be taken, only 4 to 4.5 hours of attendance.

This language is misleading because it indicates a student must pass a test with 100% accuracy before receiving credit for the course, contrary to the provisions of ACJA §7-205(F)(24)(d)(5)(n).

ACJA §7-201(A):

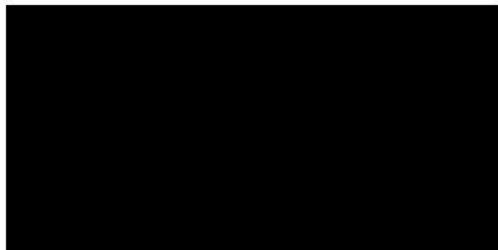
“Advisory letter” means written communication from the board notifying a certificate holder the conduct, while not warranting discipline, may result in future disciplinary action if not modified or eliminated. An advisory letter is not a disciplinary action.

ACJA §7-201(H)(b)(1):

(1) An advisory letter is not a discipline sanction and is confidential. While the conduct does not warrant any disciplinary action, the board believes the certificate holder should modify or eliminate certain practices and continuation of the activities leading to the documentation regarding the conduct being submitted to the board may result in future board action against the certificate holder. A certificate holder may file a response with the board no later than fifteen days after the date of the advisory letter. The certificate holder’s response is confidential and division staff shall file the response in the complaint file.

The Division does not contend that the Schools’ operation or conduct rises to the level of misconduct or a violation. Discipline is not warranted, but changes should be instituted to resolve the issues identified in this analysis.

Allegation 1 is not substantiated.



Shaun Baland, Investigator
Certification and Licensing Division

07/24/2025

Date

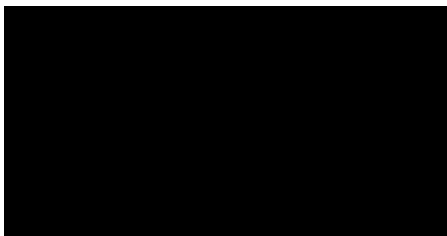
REVIEWED BY:



July 25, 2025

Pasquale Fontana, Manager
Certification and Licensing Division Date

REVIEWED BY:



July 25, 2025

Abigail Raddatz, Director
Certification and Licensing Division Date

**ARIZONA SUPREME COURT
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
REVIEW AND DECISION OF THE PROBABLE CAUSE
EVALUATOR**

REVIEW AND DECISION OF THE PROBABLE CAUSE EVALUATOR:

Under ACJA § 7-201(H)(5)(a), the deputy director, serving in the capacity of probable cause evaluator under ACJA § 7-201(D)(3)(a), having conducted an independent review of the facts and evidence gathered during the course of the investigation of complaint numbers 23-D036 through 23-D038:

- ☐ Directs division staff to investigate further.
- ☒ Determines probable cause does not exist demonstrating the certificate holder has committed any acts of misconduct or violations of the statutes, court rules, this section, or the applicable section of the ACJA and enters a written finding to that effect as to Allegation(s):

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- ☐ Determines probable cause exists demonstrating the certificate holder has committed one or more acts of misconduct or violations of the statutes, court rules, this section, or the applicable section of the ACJA and enters a written finding to that effect as to Allegation(s):


Jeffrey Schrade
Probable Cause Evaluator

8/7/2025
Date

**ARIZONA SUPREME COURT
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD**

***CERTIFICATE
HOLDER
INFORMATION***

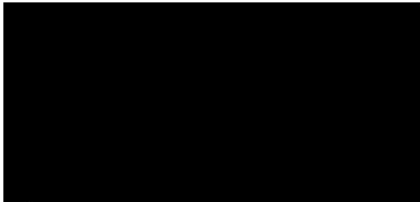
Certificate Holders:	Drive Safe AZ Traffic School Stop and Go Traffic School Stop and Go Defensive Driving
School Numbers:	██████████
Type of Certificates:	Defensive Driving Schools

RECOMMENDATION TO THE DEFENSIVE DRIVING BOARD (“BOARD”):

It is recommended the Board accept the finding of the Probable Cause Evaluator and enter a finding Drive Safe AZ Traffic School, School No. █████; Stop and Go Traffic School, School No. █████; and Stop and Go Defensive Driving, School No. █████ have not committed the alleged act(s) of misconduct as detailed in the Investigation Summary, Determination, Probable Cause Review, and Recommendation Report in complaint numbers 23-D036 through 23-D038.

It is further recommended that the Board issue an advisory letter to Drive Safe AZ Traffic School, School No. █████; Stop and Go Traffic School, School No. █████ and Stop and Go Defensive Driving, School No. █████, encouraging the Schools to review their operations to evaluate the necessity of a review exam in its delivery of their defensive driving courses, and to modify or remove the existing website language regarding the online course requiring a 100% pass rate to receive credit for the course.

SUBMITTED BY:



August 18, 2025

Abigail Raddatz, Director
Certification and Licensing Division

Date

**ARIZONA SUPREME COURT
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
DECISION AND ORDER OF THE BOARD**

DECISION AND ORDER:

The Board having reviewed the above Investigation Summary, Determination, Probable Cause Review, and Recommendation Report, regarding complaint numbers 23-D036 involving Drive Safe AZ Traffic School, School [REDACTED] 23-D037 involving Stop and Go Traffic School, School No. [REDACTED] and 23-D038 involving Stop and Go Defensive Driving, School No. [REDACTED] makes a finding of facts and this decision, based on the facts, evidence, and analysis as presented and:

☐ Request division staff to conduct further investigation;

☐ Refer the complaint to another entity with jurisdiction;

Referral to: _____

☐ Determine no violation exists and dismiss the complaint

☐ with prejudice

☐ without prejudice

☒ Determine no acts of misconduct or violation occurred and no discipline is warranted; however the certificate holder's actions need modification or elimination and issue an advisory letter pursuant to subsection (D)(5)(c)(1)(g);

☐ Enter a finding the certificate holder has violated any provisions of the statutes, court rules, this section, or the applicable ACJA specific sections or subsection (H)(6) and order an emergency summary suspension, pursuant to subsection (H)(9)(d);

☐ Enter a finding the certificate holder has violated any of the provisions of the statutes, court rules, this section, the applicable ACJA sections or subsection (H)(6) and issue an order imposing any or a combination of the following information or formal disciplinary sanctions:

☐ Issue a letter of concern

☐ Issue a censure

☐ Resolve any found acts of misconduct or violations by consent order or other negotiated settlement

☐ Place specific restrictions on a certificate

- ☐ Place the certificate holder on probation or a set period of time under specified conditions
- ☐ Mandate additional training for the certificate holder
- ☐ Issue a cease and desist order pursuant to subsection (E)96)
- ☐ Order suspension of a certificate for a set period of time with specific conditions for reinstatement

- ☐ Order revocation of a certificate with specific conditions for reinstatement
- ☐ Assess costs associated with the investigation and disciplinary proceedings; or
- ☐ Impose civil penalties associated with the investigation and disciplinary proceedings.

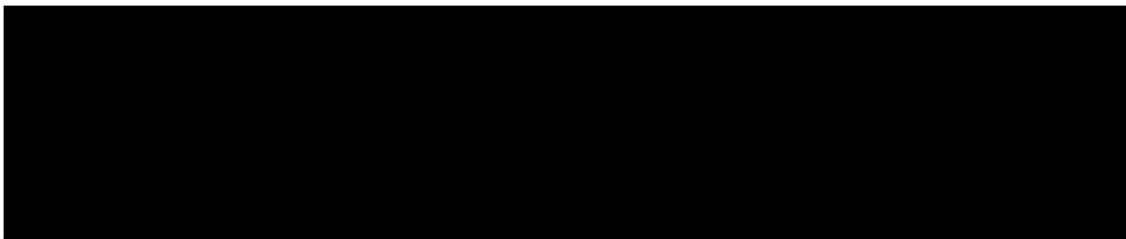
- ☐ Order the preparation of documents necessary for informal or formal disciplinary actions under subsection (H)(7)(b), (H)(8)(b) or (H)(9)(b)

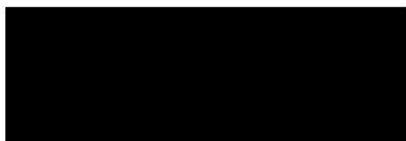
- ☐ Request the license holder appear before the Board to participate in a Formal Interview, pursuant to ACJA § 7-201(H)(8).

- ☐ Enter a finding the public health, safety or welfare is at risk, requires emergency action, and orders the immediate emergency suspension of the license and sets an expedited hearing for:

Date, Time, and Location: _____

- ☐ Order the filing of Notice of Formal Charges, pursuant to ACJA § 7-201(H)(10).
- ☒ Adopts the recommendations of the Division Director.
- ☐ Does not adopt the recommendations of the Division Director and orders:





09/17/2025

Johnny Tse Date
Defensive Driving Board