

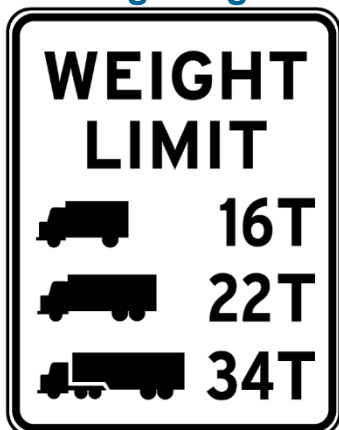
PFC Ralph T. Basiliere Bridge Replacement

Guidance for Heavy Vehicle Operators

What is happening?

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is replacing the Private First Class (PFC) Ralph T. Basiliere Bridge which carries State Route 125 over the Merrimack River in Haverhill. As of summer 2026, the project is underway with utility relocations and will progress through a series of stages, resulting in a completely new bridge by the spring of 2032.

Existing Weight Restrictions



MassDOT reminds the operators of heavy vehicles that the existing Basiliere Bridge is weight limited as follows:

- 2 axles – 16 tons
- 3 axles – 22 tons
- 5 axles – 34 tons

As part of ensuring that the Basiliere Bridge can safely remain open for

emergency response, passenger vehicles, MEVA transit and school buses, MassDOT and police details associated with the construction project are closely monitoring trucks passing over the bridge. Overweight vehicles may be stopped, rerouted, and subject to safety surcharges.

Looking Ahead

Later this summer, once all utilities have been relocated, crews will perform additional steps to prepare the downstream side of the Basiliere Bridge for demolition. To ensure a safe work zone, barrier will be placed down the center line of the bridge reducing the structure to one northbound lane (towards downtown Haverhill) and one

southbound lane (towards Bradford). **Once this condition is implemented:**

- All left turns from the bridge onto Merrimack Street will be prohibited to ensure the smooth flow of traffic.
- The remaining lanes on the Basiliere Bridge will drop to 10.5 feet wide.

If your vehicle is over 10.5 feet wide, a portion of it will project into opposing traffic and will present a hazard to oncoming vehicles including emergency response.

Vehicles which are observed to extend into opposing traffic may be stopped, rerouted, and subject to safety surcharges.

What should I do?

MassDOT recognizes that there are many destinations in Haverhill which receive or dispatch trucks including Cedars, Mondelez, Reworld Haverhill off Industrial Avenue in Bradford or the many restaurants downtown. The agency urges all drivers of heavy vehicles to begin changing their route now to avoid disruptions. **Once the Basiliere Bridge is reduced to a single lane in each direction, the agency strongly suggests that heavy vehicles cross the Merrimack on I-495 to the west of the Basiliere Bridge.** I-495 is the nearest crossing of the river to the Basiliere Bridge without weight, height, or width limits and there are multiple access routes to the interstate from Haverhill including:

- River Street (Route 113)
- Winter Street and Broadway (Route 97)
- Main Street (Route 125)
- South Main Street (Route 125)

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MassDOT would also like to advise heavy vehicle operators of several potential problems on possible alternate routes around the Basiliere Bridge. These include:

- Using the Sergeant Joseph C. Comeau Bridge, requires **passing below a railroad bridge with a clearance of 13'6"** and traveling through a dense residential neighborhood on the Bradford side of the river.
- Using Salem Street in Groveland requires **passing over the Johnson Dam which has been recently repaired but remains in poor condition**. Use of Salem Street is not recommended by Groveland Town staff.
- Using the Groveland Bridge requires **passing through the difficult intersection of School Street and Gardner Street**.

- **The Rocks Village Bridge in West Newbury has a low clearance of 12'6"**

A map of these potential problem spots is provided below. All members of the trucking community are encouraged to sign up to receive updates through the project website: mass.gov/basiliere-bridge-project-haverhill. A specific alert will be provided when the Basiliere Bridge is going to be reduced to a single lane in each direction.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact us at haverhillbasilierebridge@dot.state.ma.us. For immediate concerns or emergency conditions at the work site, please call our hotline at (978) 736-8140.

