



TEEN DRIVER LAWS



Legislation initiated by Illinois Secretary of State to improve teen driving laws with the aim of reducing traffic crashes and fatalities involving young drivers was signed into law by the Governor. This law will not only make Illinois' teen driver program one of the strongest in the nation, but more importantly, it will save lives. The law goes into effect January 1, 2008 and includes the following:

- Extends the permit phase from three months to nine months.
- Shifts the nighttime driving restriction from 11pm to 10pm on weekdays and from midnight to 11pm on weekends for all drivers under the age of 18 and those who fail to graduate from the initial licensing phase.
 - The nighttime driving restriction includes exemptions for teens that are traveling to and from school activities and work.
- Doubles the period – from six months to 12 months – that restricts a new driver to a maximum of one unrelated teen passenger.
- Requires drivers under age 18 who are ticketed for traffic violations to appear before a judge with a parent or guardian to receive court supervision. This legislation also requires the attendance of traffic school as a requisite for court supervision for drivers under the age of 21. This ensures that the parent or guardian is fully aware of the minor's traffic violation and understands the requirements and ramifications of court supervision.
- Tickets the passengers age 15 to 20, in addition to the drivers, who violate the passenger restriction law. This proposal places responsibility on both the passengers and the driver to abide by the passenger limitation provision.
- Requires student drivers to complete a minimum six hours of actual, on-the-street driving with a certified driver education instructor. This proposal eliminates the provision that allows students in high school driver education classes to take a proficiency exam after completing just three hours of practice driving. In addition, it removes current exemptions that allow the use of driving simulators and driving ranges as a substitute for street driving with a certified driver education instructor. This provision takes effect July 1, 2008.
- Implements a true Graduated Driver Licensing system that requires new drivers to earn their way from one stage to the next. Under this proposal, once issued a learner's permit, a teen would be required to drive conviction free for nine months before he or she would be eligible for a driver's license. The teen would then also have to drive conviction free for six months in addition to reaching age 18 before moving from the initial licensing phase to the full licensing phase.
 - Until graduating to the full licensing phase, these young drivers would be subject to the limitations of the initial phase that include the nighttime driving restriction and cell phone ban among others.
- Implements a stricter law in which the drivers' licenses of those under age 21 would be suspended for each additional conviction following a driver's initial suspension for two moving violations in a 24-month period.
- Establishes tough, new penalties including license revocation and vehicle impoundment for drivers who are involved in street racing.

- Parents may view their teen's (under age 18) driving record free through the Secretary of State Web site. Several security features will protect the teen's privacy and ensure that only the parents / legal guardians are granted access to the teen's driving record.
- A person under age 21 will receive a three month driver's license suspension for any court supervision for possession, consumption, purchase or receipt of alcohol.

Effective July 2007 unmarried persons under age 18 may have their driver's licenses cancelled or be refused a driver's license or permit by the Secretary of State for failing to maintain school attendance.

For more information visit the Secretary of State web site;
<http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/drivers/programs/gdlnew.html>