

GRADUATED DRIVER LICENSING PROGRAM

PERMIT PHASE — DRIVERS AGE 15

- Parent/legal guardian consent is required to obtain an instruction permit.
- Must be enrolled in an approved driver education course and pass vision and written tests.
- Nighttime driving restrictions — Sun.-Thurs., 10 p.m.-6 a.m.; Fri.-Sat., 11 p.m.-6 a.m. (local curfews may differ).
- Permit must be held for a minimum of nine months.
- Must practice driving a minimum of 50 hours, including 10 hours at night, supervised by a parent or adult ages 21 or older with a valid driver's license.
- Must not acquire driving infraction, underage alcohol conviction or court supervision during the nine-month permit phase.
- Number of passengers is limited to one in the front seat and the number of safety belts in the back seat.
- Any cellphone/wireless use while driving, including a hands-free device, is prohibited for drivers under age 19, except in the case of an emergency to contact a law enforcement agency, a health care provider or an emergency services agency.
- Permit is valid for up to two years.

Sanctions

- To obtain court supervision for a traffic violation, a driver must appear in court with a parent/legal guardian and attend traffic safety school. Limit one court supervision for serious driving offenses.
- A moving violation conviction results in a nine-month waiting period before applying for a driver's license.
- Not eligible for any hardship permit.
- Anyone caught driving without a permit is ineligible to obtain a driver's license until age 18.
- A person under age 18 with an unresolved traffic citations may not be issued a driver's license until the citation is resolved.
- Driver's License Suspension for Nighttime Driving Restriction Violation — Persons under age 18 who violate the nighttime driving restriction may have their driving privileges suspended.

INITIAL LICENSING PHASE — DRIVERS AGES 16-17

- Parent/legal guardian must certify that a minimum of 50 hours of practice driving, including 10 hours at night, has been completed.
- Parent/legal guardian must accompany teen to provide written consent to obtain a driver's license, OR complete and notarize an Affidavit/Consent for Minor to Drive form.
- Must have completed a state-approved driver education course.
- Nighttime driving restrictions — Sun.-Thurs., 10 p.m.-6 a.m.; Fri.-Sat., 11 p.m.-6 a.m. (local curfews may differ).
- Must maintain a conviction-free driving record for six months before turning 18. A traffic conviction during the Initial Licensing Phase may extend restrictions beyond age 18.
- For the first 12 months of licensing or until the driver turns 18, whichever occurs first, the number of passengers is limited to one person under age 20 unless the passenger(s) is a sibling, stepsibling, child or step-child of the driver. After this period, the number of passengers is limited to one in the front seat and the number of safety belts in the back seat.
- Any cellphone/wireless use while driving, including a hands-free device, is prohibited for drivers under age 19, except in the case of an emergency to contact a law enforcement agency, a health care provider or an emergency services agency.

Sanctions

- To obtain court supervision for a traffic violation, a driver must appear in court with a parent/legal guardian and attend traffic safety school. Limit one court supervision for serious driving offenses.
- A moving violation conviction before age 18 generates a Secretary of State warning letter to the parent and teenager.

- A moving violation conviction within the first year of licensing will result in a six-month extension of the passenger limitation, which allows only one unrelated passenger under age 20.
- Two moving violation convictions occurring within 24 months result in a minimum one-month driver's license suspension. Suspension length is determined by the seriousness of the offenses and the driver's prior driving history. An additional driver's license suspension will result in each subsequent moving violation following the initial suspension.
- Suspended drivers must attend a remedial education course, may be retested and must pay a \$70 reinstatement fee.
- Driver's License Suspension for Nighttime Driving Restriction Violation — Persons under age 18 who violate the nighttime driving restriction may have their driving privileges suspended.

FULL LICENSING PHASE — DRIVERS AGES 18-20

- No age-related restrictions apply except in cases where a driver fails to move from the Initial Licensing Phase to the Full Licensing Phase.
- Any cellphone/wireless use while driving, including a hands-free device, is prohibited for drivers under age 19, except in the case of an emergency to contact a law enforcement agency, a health care provider or an emergency services agency.

Sanctions

- Limit one court supervision for serious driving offenses.
- Two moving violation convictions occurring within 24 months result in a minimum one-month driver's license suspension. Suspension length is determined by the seriousness of the offenses and the driver's prior driving history. An additional driver's license suspension will result in each subsequent moving violation following the initial suspension.
- Suspended drivers are required to pay a \$70 reinstatement fee.

Learning how to be a good driver takes time. Along with the involvement of parents, Illinois' Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) Program will help teens gain the experience they need for a lifetime of safe, responsible driving.



Since the new GDL provisions in 2008 were implemented, teen driving deaths in the state are down by nearly 51%. As a result, Illinois' GDL Program has been lauded by traffic safety organizations across the country and remains a national model for teen driver safety.

Illinois has been a national leader in efforts to combat distracted driving. Texting while driving is the most dangerous form of distracted driving. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, driving while texting is six times more dangerous than impaired driving. Texting drivers are 23 times more likely to be involved in crashes than not texting drivers. In 2020, more than 14,000 drivers were convicted for texting, talking or dialing on a handheld cellphone. I encourage drivers to put away their cellphones while behind the wheel and focus on the task at hand: driving safely.

For more information on Illinois' Graduated Driver Licensing Program, please visit ilsos.gov.

Alexi Giannoulias
Secretary of State

PARENTAL ACCESS TO TEEN'S DRIVING RECORD

The parent/legal guardian of a person under age 18 who holds an instruction permit or a graduated driver's license may access the minor's driving record free online.

ilsos.gov

RELATED TEEN DRIVING LAWS

- **Cellphone Ban** — Cellphone/wireless use while driving, including a hands-free device, is prohibited for drivers under age 19, except in the case of an emergency to contact a law enforcement agency, a health care provider or an emergency services agency.
- **Texting Ban** — Texting while driving, regardless of age, is prohibited.
- **Adult Driver Education** — A person ages 18-20 who did not take an approved driver education course must complete a six-hour Adult Driver Education course before obtaining a driver's license.
- **Traffic Citations** — A person under age 18 who has any unresolved traffic citations may not be issued an instruction permit or a driver's license.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

- The Secretary of State provides a Parent-Teen Driving Guide and Contract at ilsos.gov that establishes practice driving tips, parameters and boundaries between parents and teens to enable young drivers to acquire safe driving habits and skills.
- A parent/legal guardian must provide written consent when a minor applies for a driver's license at a Driver Services facility. The parent/legal guardian also must verify that the teen driver has completed at least 50 hours of practice driving, including 10 hours at night.
- A parent/legal guardian may withdraw consent for the minor to hold a driver's license at any time, for any reason, until the driver turns 18 by contacting the Secretary of State's office. Driving privileges will not be reinstated until the parent/legal guardian again provides consent or until the driver turns 18. The teen driver must reapply for a driver's license, retake all applicable tests and pay the appropriate fees.

For more information:

312-814-2905 • 217-782-2952

888-261-5238 (TTY/NexTalk)

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Graduated Driver Licensing Program

