

A PARENT GUIDE TO THE GRADUATED DRIVER LICENSE (GDL)

UNDERSTANDING VERMONT'S GDL LAW AND THE PARENT ROLE IN TEEN DRIVING SAFETY



Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death and injury for teenagers. As a parent or guardian, you have a critical role in influencing your child's safe driving habits.

This guide is meant to help you better understand and reinforce positive teen driving behaviors required by Vermont's GDL. This law requires teens 15 to 18 years old learn to drive in stages. Restrictions on young drivers are based on scientific findings and some of the major factors that place teens at risk: age, lack of driving experience, passengers and other distractions. **The GDL exists to save teen lives and reduce injuries.**

However, the GDL alone cannot prevent all teen crashes. Additional tips are provided to help you promote your teen's safe driving.

SUMMARY OF THE VERMONT GDL

Learner's Permit

WHO

- Must be at least 15 years old
- Must have no violations on record at Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) in the previous two years to take the Learner's Permit test
- Must provide an application signed by a parent or guardian

HOW LONG

- Must hold Learner's Permit for at least one year before applying for a Junior Operator's License. Exception: if 18 before this time, may apply for Operator's License

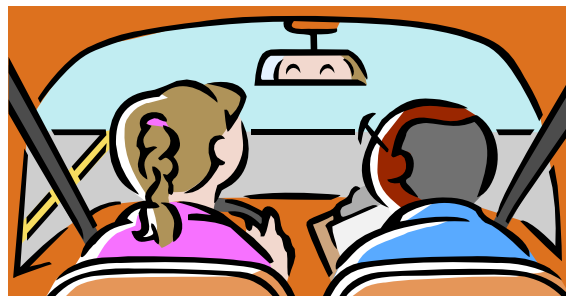
CONDITIONS/RESTRICTIONS

- May only drive a motor vehicle if accompanied by one of the following people who is riding beside him/her in the front seat:

- ♦ A licensed and unimpaired parent or guardian
- ♦ A licensed or certified and unimpaired driver education instructor
- ♦ A licensed and unimpaired individual at least 25 years of age

CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATIONS

- Each of the following violations of GDL will result in a 90 day recall:
 - ♦ Points – a single 3 point speeding violation
 - ♦ Points – accumulation of a 6 point total
 - ♦ Driving without one of the people as described above
- While a recall is in effect, the individual cannot drive (at all)



Junior Operator's License

WHO

- Issued only to a person 16 or 17 years old who meets the following:
 - ♦ Possesses a Learner's Permit for at least one year
 - ♦ Passes an approved driver education course (see Driver Education section on page 5) and obtains a Driver Education Completion Certificate
 - ♦ Completes an additional forty (40) hours of practice behind the wheel, with at least ten (10) of those hours being nighttime driving, while accompanied by one of the individuals as described in the box on page 2
 - Proof of this additional practice must be submitted at the time of application for a Junior Operator's License
 - ♦ Maintains a "clean" driving record without any recalls, suspensions or revocations for the preceding six months
 - ♦ Provides an application signed by a parent or guardian
 - ♦ Passes the required road examination

HOW LONG

- Until the age of 18, then may apply for Operator's License

CONDITIONS/RESTRICTIONS

- **Throughout the Junior Operator's License phase:**
 - ♦ May not carry passengers for hire
 - ♦ May not carry more passengers than there are seatbelts
 - ♦ May not operate a vehicle in the course of employment (for example, a pizza delivery driver) unless license has been held for one year or driver reaches age 18

Additional restrictions apply:

- **First three months:**
 - ♦ Must drive alone or with one of the individuals as described in the box on page 2
 - ♦ May transport any number of passengers, as long as there are enough seatbelts for everyone, if one of the individuals as described in the box on page 2 is in the front seat of the vehicle with the teen driver
- **Second three months:**
 - ♦ May begin transporting properly restrained family members only without being accompanied by one of the individuals as described in the box on page 2.

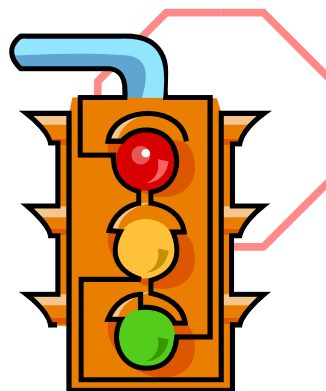
Junior Operator's License (cont.)

CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATIONS

- Each of the following violations of GDL will result in a **90 day recall**:
 - ♦ Carrying passengers for hire
 - ♦ Driving for employer/employment within first year
 - ♦ Points – a single 3 point speeding violation
 - ♦ Points – accumulation of a 6 point total
 - ♦ Passenger restrictions
- When a recall is issued, the individual has the right to a hearing
- While a recall is in effect, the individual cannot drive (at all)
- When a Junior Operator's License is recalled, it will be restored at the end of the specified period of time
- Parents or other drivers who permit teenagers to violate GDL restrictions may themselves be ticketed for allowing "illegal operation". For example, it is illegal for parents or other drivers to allow teens to transport passengers other than family members during the second three months of holding a Junior Operator's License under GDL.

NOTE: Both the Learner's Permit and the Junior Operator's License are "provisional" and can be recalled.

- **As a parent or guardian, you may suspend your child's provisional license by writing to the Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles**
- **A recommendation from a Diversion/Reparative Board may result in a 30 day recall**



Driver Education

- Vermont high schools offer driver education as part of the regular curriculum. The Vermont Department of Education has an Office of Driver and Traffic Safety Education. The telephone number is 802-828-3126.
- Vermont Commercial Driver Training Schools also offer driver training courses (see “Driving Instruction” in the phone book or visit the driver training website <http://www.aot.state.vt.us/dmv/LICENSES/drivertraining/DriverTrainingSchools.htm>)

A wallet-sized certificate will be issued to those who pass the course.



Please review your VT Driver's Manual or visit the Vermont DMV website (www.dmv.state.vt.us) to see detailed information regarding required identification and testing for each stage of the Graduated Driver License.



OTHER WAYS TO HELP ASSURE TEEN DRIVING SAFETY

1. Assure your teen has plenty of chances to practice supervised driving, even more than the required 40 hours described on page 3.

2. Set a good example as a safe, responsible, and law-abiding driver.

3. Set and discuss family rules for maintaining driving privileges based on known risk factors for teen drivers. Such rules could address:

- ◆ Lack of safety belt use
- ◆ Speeding
- ◆ Nighttime driving (after 9 p.m.)
- ◆ Using a cell phone or other distractions
- ◆ Multiple teen passengers
- ◆ Drowsy driving
- ◆ Impaired driving



4. Help your teen understand the risks associated with riding with another teen driver, particularly those who choose to drive dangerously and/or violate the laws.

5. Communicate with your child and other parents to help everyone, both drivers and passengers, to follow the Junior Operator's license restrictions. This will help all teens stay safe and within the GDL law.

6. Encourage your teen to speak up for safety when riding with other drivers.

7. Choose a safe, reliable, well-maintained vehicle for your teen driver. (Visit www.iihs.org/ratings for crash ratings of vehicles and other information about choosing safe vehicles for teens).



TEEN DRIVING RESOURCES

Please review these selected websites for additional resources for you and your teen driver.

AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety – www.aaafoundation.org/home/

Valuable, although lengthy resources for driver education and Graduated Driver Licensing programs based in research. Includes an interactive DVD (available for a fee) *driver-ZED*™3.0 (“*Zero Errors Driving*”) that puts your teen in the virtual driver’s seat. Developed by the nonprofit AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, teens can navigate 100 live-action scenarios and learn how to identify, assess and react to a wide range of potential risks.

American Driver & Traffic Safety Education Association – www.adtsea.iup.edu

Includes a downloadable (for a fee) *Parent Mentor Practice Guide*, a home practice guide for the parent and new driver.

Insurance Institute for Highway Safety – www.iihs.org

Click on Consumer Brochures & Videos for a printable brochure entitled “*Beginning Teen Age Drivers*”. Concise tips on how parents can establish driving rules based on the Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) model.

National Institute for Driver Behavior – www.nidb.org

A site based on education as an essential component of any plan for reducing crashes. This site provides specific standards for driver risk-reduction behavior so that with proper practice over time, drivers can reach a stage where a low risk driving style is automatic.

National Safety Council Publication: Family Guide to Teen Driver Safety – www.nsc.org/issues/teendriving/

Resources include teen driving fact sheets and a comprehensive guide (available for a fee) entitled *Teen Driver: A Family Guide to Teen Driver Safety*.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Contact the Vermont DMV

www.dmv.state.vt.us

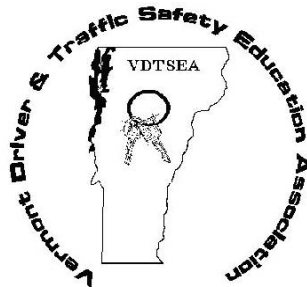
Main office – Montpelier – 802-828-2000

Central Scheduling – 802-828-2085



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120 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05603-0001

Phone: 802-828-2000



VDTSEA
Driver Education
VT Dept. of Education
120 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620

Phone: 802-828-3126



"committed to teen safety & awareness"
www.vtlsp.org

VTLSP
VT Dept. of Education
120 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620

Phone: 802-828-1636
Fax: 802-828-0573



VT Dept. of Health
108 Cherry Street
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Phone: 802-847-4220
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