

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

Recent changes in the law require teen drivers applying for a GDL Level 1 or Level 2 license to provide documentation of a valid [Social Security number, U.S. citizenship or legal presence, identity and residency](#). Although we are revising the GDL Parents Guide booklet, the Web version and printed copies do not yet reflect these latest changes.

More information about the licensing requirements is available on the Department of State Web site under Driver's License or State ID or by calling (888) SOS-MICH (767-6424).



MICHIGAN'S GRADUATED DRIVER LICENSING:

A Guide for Parents





Dear Parents:

Welcome to Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL). Each year, about 120,000 teenagers enroll in driver education, heralding the start of an exciting chapter in their lives. Learning to drive is an important rite of passage for teens – especially in today’s mobile society.

Under GDL, driving privileges are gradually increased as teens advance through three licensing levels. The program’s success rests on the combined efforts of the instructors, parents, students and third-party testers. I am proud to say that Michigan’s GDL program is one of the most comprehensive in the nation and has served as a model for other states.

As a parent, you have an important role in your child’s driver education. The “Michigan’s Graduated Driver Licensing” booklet is designed to guide you and your teen through the GDL process. Whether you have a question about enrolling in a driver education class, supervising your teen’s driving or developing a parent-teen safe-driving contract, you will find the information you need in this handy manual.

The Department of State Driver Education Program is committed to ensuring that your son or daughter is provided with the skills, training and information required to be a responsible and courteous driver. By working together, we can help keep young drivers safe on the road.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terri Land". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Terri Lynn Land
Secretary of State

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Please note: All of the following information is also available on the Michigan Department of State's Web site — www.Michigan.gov/sos

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Welcome to Michigan's Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) program. This booklet provides you with easy-to-understand, step-by-step explanations of GDL. Each section contains a checklist of helpful points to guide you and your teen through the GDL process.

The goal of GDL is to reduce crashes, serious injuries and traffic-related deaths involving teen drivers and their passengers. Through GDL, teen drivers gain the knowledge, skill and experience needed to develop safe driving habits.

WHAT IS GRADUATED DRIVER LICENSING?



Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) is a driver licensing system designed to teach teens to drive by gradually increasing their driving privileges as they advance through the system. GDL consists of two segments of driver education instruction and three licensing levels.

The driver education course is made up of Segment 1, which consists of a minimum of 24 hours of classroom instruction, a minimum of six hours of behind-the-wheel instruction and a minimum of four hours of observation time as a passenger in a training vehicle, and Segment 2, which consists of a minimum of six hours of classroom instruction, designed to provide teens with defensive driving skills.

The three licensing levels in GDL are: a supervised learner's license (Level 1 License), an intermediate license that limits unsupervised nighttime driving (Level 2 License), and a full-privilege driver license (Level 3 License) issued after a teen driver has successfully completed all previous instructional and driving requirements. GDL license levels 1 and 2 have certain restrictions to limit teens' driving exposure to high-risk situations and help protect them while they are learning to drive.

GDL Suspensions

Teens ticketed and convicted of violating the restrictions of their GDL licenses will be referred for a driver assessment reexamination by the Michigan Department of State. Depending on the nature of the violation, the department may suspend the teen's license for 30 days up to a year. Any suspension action taken against the license may also significantly delay a teen's advancement through GDL.

GETTING STARTED IN GDL

Choosing a Driver Education Program

Driver education programs are provided by both public school districts and private driving schools. When selecting a school, it is important to consider the school's reputation, program cost and any contract requirements. For a list of the driver education programs offered in your area, contact your public school district or look in your telephone book's yellow pages under "Driving Instruction."

Public Schools — Teens with Special Needs

Students identified with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and special education students are entitled to enroll in the driver education course offered within their school district. Students are entitled to accommodations (at no additional expense to the parent) to minimize the effects of their disabilities as long as their disabilities do not prevent them from driving safely (e.g., seizure conditions, blindness, etc.). Parents and school districts may agree upon appropriate accommodations in a written plan developed by the parents and school personnel. For additional information regarding accommodations for students with disabilities and driver education, please telephone the Michigan Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Help Line at (888) 320-8384, or the Michigan Assistive Technology Resource at (800) 274-7426.

Driver Training Schools — Teens with Special Needs

Students with disabilities who attend driver education offered by driver training schools may be entitled to accommodations (at no additional expense to the parent) to minimize the effects of their disabilities as long as their disabilities do not prevent them from driving safely (e.g., seizure conditions, blindness, etc.). The Americans with Disabilities Act may require a driver training school to provide auxiliary aids depending on if the service is "readily achievable." For additional information, contact the Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns, either by telephone at (877) 499-6232 or at www.Michigan.gov/cis.

BEGINNING DRIVER EDUCATION

Segment 1 Driver Education

Requirements

- 14 years, 8 months of age
- Permission of parent/guardian

Availability

- Public School District (may require a fee)
- Driver Training School (fee required)

Minimum Course Content

- Minimum of 24 hours of classroom instruction
- Minimum of six hours behind-the-wheel driving experience
- Minimum of four hours of observation time in a training vehicle

Restrictions

- May drive only with driver education instructor unless school issued limited parent driving permit


Congratulations! Your daughter or son is 14 years, 8 months old and is eligible to begin driver education. As a parent or legal guardian, your first step begins by granting permission to your teen to enroll in a Segment 1 driver education course certified by the Michigan Department of State. You have the right to postpone enrolling your teen in driver education if you feel he or she is not ready to take on the responsibilities of learning to drive. Segment 1 of driver education consists of a minimum of 24 hours of classroom instruction, a minimum of six hours of behind-the-wheel instruction and a minimum of four hours of observation time in a training vehicle. Segment 1 is designed to prepare teens to acquire a Level 1 License. Upon successful completion of Segment 1 and the Segment 1 Knowledge Test, developed by the Department of State, a green driver education *Segment 1 Certificate of Completion* will be issued to your teen. The

Segment 1 Certificate of Completion is not a permit to drive and cannot be treated as a driver's license.

After completing Segment 1, your teen is ready to apply for a Level 1 License. Both you and your teen must go to a Secretary of State branch office to apply for the Level 1 License.

Points to remember:

- Contact your teen's school well in advance of when you wish your teen to start GDL. Failure to apply in advance may delay enrollment until the next session. Both public school districts and private driving schools provide driver education courses.
- Your teen must be at least 14 years, 8 months to begin Segment 1 of driver education.
- Obtain date, time and location for the Segment 1 driver education course.
- Obtain date for GDL Parents Meeting (if school offers one).
- Follow enrollment procedure for the school you choose.
- Notify the school if your teen has any physical or medical conditions that might affect his or her driving.
- Vision screening will be **required** prior to your teen's approval to begin the behind-the-wheel instruction as part of Segment 1 of the driver education course.
- Obtain a vision screening from a health professional or contact the school to see if one is provided.
- Obtain a certified copy of your teen's birth certificate—hospital birth certificates are not acceptable. Certified birth certificates are available from the county clerk's office of the county where your teen was born. A Michigan state identification card or moped license will also be accepted.
- **Make plans to ensure your teen has safe transportation to and from the Segment 1 driver education course.**
- **The Driver Education Segment 1 Certificate of Completion is not a permit to drive and cannot be treated as a driver's license.**

MICHIGAN DRIVER EDUCATION			A 111111
DES-001 (2/06)	SEGMENT 1	CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION	
This is to certify that:			
_____	_____	_____	_____
First	Middle	Last	DATE
Date of Birth: _____	_____	_____	_____
Month	Day	Year	
has successfully completed Segment 1 of a driver education course in compliance with PA 369 of 1974. The instruction was provided by:			_____
_____	_____		Driver Education Instructor Signature
NAME OF SCHOOL	CITY	_____	Authorized School Official Signature
DRIVER EDUCATION CODE	THIS IS NOT A DRIVER LICENSE. THE STUDENT MUST OBTAIN A LEVEL 1 LICENSE FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO DRIVE A VEHICLE.		

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PREPARING FOR THE LEVEL 1 LEARNER'S LICENSE

Level 1 Learner's License

Requirements

- Must have a *Certificate of Completion* for Segment 1
- Must have a certified copy of birth certificate
- Parent/guardian signature required on application
- Pass vision screening required by Secretary of State
- Provide Social Security number

Availability

- Obtain Level 1 License at a Secretary of State branch office
- May only drive with licensed parent/guardian or designated licensed adult age 21 or older
- Parent/guardian or designated adult should sit in the front seat
- If driving with a designated adult, driver should carry a signed letter of authorization from parent/guardian

It is important to obtain the Level 1 License as soon as your teen finishes Segment 1 of driver education. GDL requires your teen to hold a Level 1 License for at least six months from the date of issuance (found on the upper left corner of the Level 1 License), before applying for a Level 2 License. The longer you delay in obtaining the Level 1 License for your teen, the longer your teen must wait to apply for a Level 2 License.

Points to remember:

- Bring the following to a Secretary of State branch office when applying for a Level 1 License:
 - The green *Certificate of Completion for Segment 1*. The green *Certificate of Completion* is not a driver's license.

- A certified birth certificate. (A current state identification card or moped license will be accepted if you cannot locate the certified birth certificate.)
- Social Security number.
- As the parent or legal guardian, you will need to grant written permission on the Level 1 License application for your teen to obtain the license.
- Obtain the following from the branch office staff:
 - A validated Level 1 License. There is no fee.
 - A copy of the *Driving Skills Test Study Guide* (SOS-360), which includes the 50-hour driving log for recording all the hours of supervised driving.
 - A list of third-party testing organizations.

The *Driving Skills Test Study Guide* and the list of third-party testing organizations are also available on the Secretary of State's Web site at: www.Michigan.gov/sos.

- After the Level 1 License is issued to your teen, you may cancel it at any time if you believe your teen is not ready to drive under supervision. To cancel the Level 1 License, you will need to go to a Secretary of State branch office, turn in the Level 1 License and sign a *Driver License Cancellation* form. If the license is lost, stolen or unavailable, as a parent, you must sign a certification stating the reason the license is not available.
- Teens who have not been previously licensed will be placed on a minimum three-year probationary period beginning when a Level 1 License is issued. Probation is a separate program from GDL. Please see page 21 of this booklet for more information.

<p>05212003 TN P141 096 0003 0.00</p> <p>MICHIGAN GRADUATED LEVEL 1 LEARNER'S LICENSE</p> <p>MICHIGAN DRIVER LICENSE D 616 514 662 841 EXPIRES ON 11-01-2005</p> <p>UNDER 21 LICENSE TYPE 01</p> <p>UNTIL 11-01-2008</p> <p>LEVEL ONE DRIVER</p> <p>1234 ABC AVENUE</p> <p>LANSING MI 48918</p> <p>DATE OF BIRTH 11-01-1987 SEX M EYE COLOR BLU HEIGHT 5 5</p> <p>RESTRICTIONS:</p> <p>SIGNATURE <u>X</u></p> <p><small>I certify the above information is true and correct. I have researched all valid licenses issued to me by this or any other state, and I do not possess a valid license. I do not have any physical or mental disability which affects my ability to operate a motor vehicle unless my license is restricted. I have no suspension or revocation of my license in any state. I understand my signature may be required and used for program administration by the Department of State. NOTE: IT IS A CRIME TO MAKE A FALSE STATEMENT OR CONCEAL A MATERIAL FACT WHEN APPLYING FOR A LICENSE OR PERMIT.</small></p>	<p>INFORMATION REGARDING YOUR LEVEL 1 LEARNER'S LICENSE</p> <p>You may operate a motor vehicle only when accompanied by a licensed parent or legal guardian or, with permission of the parent or legal guardian, any licensed driver 21 years of age or older.</p> <p>To be eligible for a Level 2 license you must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be at least 16 years old. 2. Possess a graduated level 1 learner's license for at least 6 months. 3. Successfully complete a segment 2 driver education course approved by the Department of Education. 4. Have no convictions or civil infractions, license suspensions, or at-fault crashes for the 90-day period immediately preceding your application. 5. Certify that you have accumulated at least 50 hours of behind-the-wheel experience, of which not less than 10 hours was at night, while accompanied by your parent or legal guardian or, with permission of parent or legal guardian, by any licensed driver 21 years of age or older. 6. Have your parent or legal guardian certify the 50 hours of behind-the-wheel experience. 7. Meet physical and mental standards set by the Department of State. 8. Pass a road skills test administered by an approved examiner. A list of approved examiners is available at your local branch office. <p>APPROVAL OF PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN</p> <p>SIGNATURE <u>X</u></p> <p><small>SIGNATURE OF PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN</small></p> <p><small>I understand my signature may be retained and used for programs administered by the Department of State.</small></p> <p style="text-align: right;">TR-2L (11/99)</p>
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YOUR TEENAGER HAS A LEVEL 1 LICENSE: NOW WHAT?

The Level 1 License is a learner's license. It places the greatest restrictions on your teen's driving privileges during the time he or she is beginning to acquire the fundamental skills necessary to be a competent and safe driver. With a Level 1 License, a teen may operate a motor vehicle only when accompanied by a licensed parent or legal guardian or any licensed driver 21 years of age or older designated by the parent or legal guardian.

As a parent or guardian, it is your responsibility to make sure your teen completes the required supervised driving with you or another licensed adult driver before Segment 2 of driver education begins. If your teen is driving with a designated licensed adult, your teen **should** carry a signed letter of authorization from you.

Now is a good time to develop a *Parent-Teen Safe Driving Contract* with your teen, setting the limits for acceptable and safe driving behavior (see sample contract on the Secretary of State's Web site at: www.Michigan.gov/sos). By showing an interest in your teen's progress, asking positive questions and emphasizing the importance of courtesy and good driving skills, you will help your teen become a safe and responsible driver.

Points to remember:

- Contact your insurance agent to verify coverage with a Level 1 License.
- Help your teen develop the habit of always carrying his or her license when driving.
- Prepare the driving log and record all supervised driving time. The *Driving Skills Test Study Guide* provides a driving log for your use. For information on how best to structure the behind-the-wheel experience for your teen's benefit, as well as your own, talk to your teen's driver education instructor and check the resource list at the back of this booklet.
- Begin providing supervised driving time with your teen. Your teen must complete a minimum of 30 hours of supervised driving, including a minimum of two hours of nighttime driving before beginning Segment 2 of the driver education course. Your teen must

possess a valid Level 1 License for not less than three continuous months prior to enrolling in Segment 2. A good rule of thumb is to complete at least 10 hours of supervised driving each month between Segment 1 and Segment 2.

- If you do not want your teen to advance to the next level of licensing, he or she may continue to drive with a Level 1 License until age 18.

PREPARING FOR SEGMENT 2 OF DRIVER EDUCATION

Segment 2 Driver Education

Requirements

- 30 hours minimum of supervised driving time including a minimum of two hours night driving
- Held a valid Level 1 License for not less than three continuous months

Availability

- Driver education providers who are certified to teach teens

Minimum Course Content


- Six hours of classroom driver education instruction

To enroll in Segment 2, your teen must have held a valid Level 1 License for not less than three continuous months. The Department of State requires that your teen must log at least 30 hours of supervised driving, including two hours at night, with a licensed parent, guardian or designated licensed adult age 21 or older before entering Segment 2.

Points to remember:

- Your teen cannot drive to or from the Segment 2 course without a licensed parent, guardian or designated licensed adult age 21 or older in the front seat.

- Obtain a white *Segment 2 Certificate of Completion* when your teen successfully completes Segment 2. The certificate must be presented to the driving skills test examiner before a road test is given.

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DES-002 (2/06)	SEGMENT 2	CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION	
This is to certify that:			
_____	_____	_____	_____
First	Middle	Last	DATE
Date of Birth: _____			
Month	Day	Year	
has successfully completed Segment 2 of a driver education course in compliance with PA 369 of 1974. The instruction was provided by:			
_____		_____	
NAME OF SCHOOL	CITY	Driver Education Instructor Signature	
_____		_____	
DRIVER EDUCATION CODE		Authorized School Official Signature	
			
<p style="color: red; font-size: small;">THIS IS NOT A DRIVER LICENSE. THE STUDENT MUST POSSESS A DRIVER LICENSE OBTAINED FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO DRIVE A VEHICLE.</p>			

VOID

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GETTING READY FOR THE DRIVING SKILLS TEST

Driving Skills Tests

Requirements

- Completed Segment 2 of the driver education course
- Completed a minimum 50 hours of supervised driving, which includes a minimum of 10 hours of night driving
- Has had a Level 1 License for a minimum of six months

Availability

- Independent testing organization approved by the Secretary of State
- Driving skills test fee required, varies with testing organization

Before your teen driver can apply to take the driving skills test, he or she must have successfully completed Segment 2 of the driver education course, received the white *Segment 2 Certificate of Completion* and logged a minimum of 50 hours supervised driving which includes a minimum of 10 hours at night. Driving skills tests are provided by independent third-party testing organizations approved by the Secretary of State's office.

The driving skills test will consist of two parts—a basic control skills test and an on-road driving test.

Points to remember:

- Review the Michigan Department of State's *Driving Skills Test Study Guide* (SOS-360) with your teen.

- Practice all required driving skills and maneuvers outlined in the *Driving Skills Test Study Guide* with your teen. These skills are basic to becoming a competent driver. Failure to practice them can place your teen at a disadvantage at the driving skills test. Practicing is not allowed on third-party testing sites.
- Contact an independent third-party testing organization to schedule a date, time and location. **Driving skills test fees vary; be sure to ask about the cost.** A list of third-party testing organizations is available at any Secretary of State branch office or on the department's Web site (www.Michigan.gov/sos). Your teen's driver education instructor may have additional information about third-party testing organizations in your area. Your telephone book's yellow pages will also list them.
- Make sure the vehicle your teen drives during the driving skills test is safe and that your teen is familiar with its operation. If the vehicle does not meet the equipment and safety standards as described in the *Driving Skills Test Study Guide*, it cannot be used for the driving skills test.
- Provide the driving skills test examiner with the following documents:
 - The white *Segment 2 Certificate of Completion*.
 - The Level 1 License.
 - Your valid vehicle registration and proof of insurance certificate.
- **Be sure to allow at least one hour for the driving skills test.** You, as a parent or legal guardian, will be required to ride in the vehicle during the road test portion of the basic skills test. No additional passengers are allowed.
- A parent or legal guardian must sign a certification that the applicant has completed the required minimum 50 hours of behind-the-wheel driving experience.
- When your teen passes the driving skills test, he or she will receive a *Driver Skills Test Certificate*, which is valid for one year.
- **If your teen fails to pass the driving skills test:**
 - You will receive a test review explaining the reasons for failure.
 - You will need to obtain information about retesting.
 - Review the *Driving Skills Test Study Guide* with your teen.
 - Continue to supervise your teen's driving, emphasizing the correct driving skills and stressing those that were not passed during the driving skills test.
 - A retesting fee will be required. These fees will vary by testing organization.

THE LEVEL 2 INTERMEDIATE LICENSE

Level 2 Intermediate License

Requirements

- Teen is at least 16 years old
- Meet physical and medical licensing standards
- Possessed a Level 1 License for six months
- Completed Segment 1 and 2 of an approved driver education program
- Passed a driving skills test and presented a skills test certificate
- Completed a minimum of 50 hours of supervised driving time, including 10 hours at night
- Must be violation and suspension free, and have no at-fault crashes during the 90 days prior to applying for the Level 2 License
- Have a parent or legal guardian sign the application and certify the minimum 50 hours of behind-the-wheel driving experience

Availability

- Obtain Level 2 License at a Secretary of State branch office (a fee is required)

Restrictions

- Between midnight and 5 a.m., teen must drive with a designated licensed adult over age 21 unless driving to and from employment

Parent Option

- Parent/guardian has the option of requesting in writing that the teen driver remain at Level 2 and not automatically advance to Level 3 at age 17. Request must be made at least 30 days before teen's 17th birthday.

The Level 2 License has fewer restrictions than the Level 1 License. Under the Level 2 License, teens are permitted to drive unsupervised

except between the hours of midnight and 5 a.m. when they must have a licensed adult with them. Teens who must drive between midnight and 5 a.m. because of work are not required to have an adult with them. However, they should be able to provide proof that they are traveling directly to or from employment.

It is extremely important to continue to stay involved with your teen driver by emphasizing the importance of a positive attitude and safe driving skills. As your teen gains more experience and enjoys greater freedom behind the wheel, take time to review your *Parent-Teen Safe Driving Contract* with your teen. Continue to stress the importance of safe driving as you determine the rules for using the vehicle, the number of passengers allowed and any other restrictions you set based on your teen's maturity and driving skill.

Points to remember:

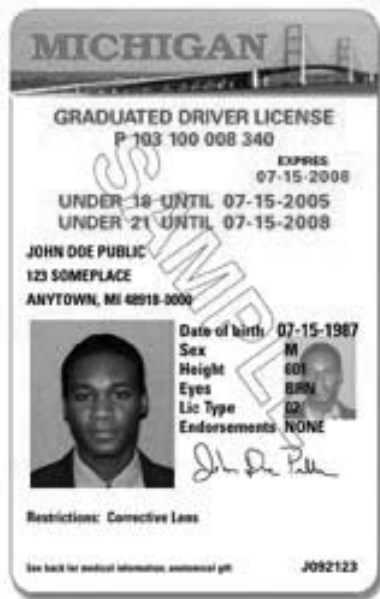
- To obtain a Level 2 License your teen must:
 - Be at least 16 years old.
 - Have parental permission.
 - Have completed Segment 1 and Segment 2 of the driver education course.
 - Have completed a minimum of 50 hours of behind-the-wheel experience, of which at least 10 hours must include driving at night.
 - Have held a Level 1 License for at least six months.
 - Be violation and suspension free, and have no at-fault crashes during the 90 days prior to applying for a Level 2 License.
- Bring the following to the Secretary of State branch office when applying for the Level 2 License:
 - The Level 1 License.
 - The *Segment 2 Certificate of Completion*.
 - The *Driving Skills Test Certificate*.
 - Cash, check or money order to pay the fee for the Level 2 License. Secretary of State branch offices do not accept credit cards, except PLUS offices and SUPER!Centers, which will accept the Discover credit card.
 - A smile. Your teen's photograph will be taken for the Level 2 License.

When your teen applies for a Level 2 License, you have the choice of allowing your teen to automatically advance to a Level 3 License when he or she is eligible or delaying the Level 3 License until you decide your teen is ready to have full driving privileges with no restrictions.

If you **do not** want your teen to automatically advance to a Level 3 License, you must complete the *Parent/Guardian Request to Continue Minor's Level 2 Intermediate License form*. This form was included with the information you received at the time you and your teen applied for the Level 2 License at the Secretary of State branch office. **This form must be completed and mailed 30 days before your teen's 17th birthday.** Your teen will continue to drive under the Level 2 restrictions until you decide your teen is ready for a Level 3 License or until your teen turns 18 years old. GDL ends for teens when they turn 18.

Once the Level 2 License is issued, you may decide to restrict it to a Level 1 License. You may also cancel the Level 2 License if you believe your teen is not ready for it. You will need to go to a Secretary of State branch office, surrender your teen's license and sign a form to restrict or cancel it.

Once you restrict or cancel a license, you may reinstate it or lift the restrictions. To do so, you will need to go to a Secretary of State branch office and process a new application. You will be required to pay a fee and your teen's photograph will need to be retaken.



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THE FINAL STAGE—GAINING FULL DRIVING PRIVILEGES AT LEVEL 3

Level 3 License

Requirements

- Teen is at least 17 years old
- Held Level 2 License for six months
- **Must be violation- and suspension-free, and have no at-fault crashes for 12 consecutive months prior to applying for the Level 3 License**

Availability

- With parent/guardian approval at Level 2, the Level 3 License is automatically mailed to teen
- If approval was not given, parent/guardian and teen must go to a Secretary of State branch office

Restrictions

- No fee is required
- No state-imposed license restrictions
- Parent or guardian may restrict or cancel the license

Although the Level 3 License carries no state-imposed restrictions, you may **continue to place limits** you feel necessary on your teen's driving privileges. Your teen is eligible for a Level 3 License if he or she is at least 17 years old, has held a Level 2 License for at least six months and has been crash- and violation-free during the prior 12 months.

You do not have to go to a Secretary of State branch office to obtain a Level 3 License. Your teen will automatically progress to a Level 3 License when he or she meets the Level 3 criteria shown above. The Level 3 License will be mailed to your teen's address on file with the Secretary of State.

Once the Level 3 License is issued, you may decide to restrict it to a Level 2 or Level 1 License. You may also cancel the Level 3 License if you believe your teen is not ready for restricted or unrestricted driving privileges. You will need to go to a Secretary of State branch office, surrender your teen's license and sign a form to restrict or cancel it.

Points to remember:

- Discuss your *Parent-Teen Safe Driving Contract* with your teen. You have the right to restrict your teen's driving activities when necessary.
- Your teen will automatically advance to a Level 3 License unless you inform the Secretary of State otherwise.
- You may restrict or cancel your teen's Level 3 License.
- GDL ends for teens when they turn 18, no matter what licensing level they have achieved.
- Teens exiting GDL may still be subject to probationary requirements. Probation does not automatically end at age 18. (See *A Word About the Michigan Department of State Probationary License Program*, page 21).



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COACHING YOUR TEEN

Behind-the-Wheel Tips

Most teens view a driver's license as a "rite of passage" to adulthood and freedom, and eagerly await the time when they can legally drive. Statistics reveal that teens as a group are more likely to be involved in a traffic crash. For example, teens between the ages of 16 and 19 are **four times** as likely as other drivers to be involved in traffic crashes. The problem is not a teen's age. It is inexperience behind the wheel, poor judgment, tendency to act impulsively or emotionally, belief in his or her invincibility and peer pressure that lead to risky driving behaviors and increased number of crashes.

As the parent or guardian of a teen in GDL, you have an important role in determining the type of driver your teen will become. Your coaching will work to reinforce the basic skills, driving strategies and attitudes taught in driver education.

The role model you present as a driver is especially important. Once you are aware of your own driving habits, you will be in a better position to coach your teen driver. Take a moment to assess your own driving behavior. Do you:

- Make sure everyone in the vehicle wears a safety belt? It is the law.
- Know your car, especially the controls and safety devices?
- Always drive defensively?
- Control emotions during all driving experiences?
- Obey all traffic laws?

Your coaching responsibility begins when your teen enrolls in Segment 1 of the driver education course and extends throughout the graduated licensing process. With young, inexperienced drivers, it is important to begin slowly and gradually introduce more difficult maneuvers and traffic situations. Your first coaching efforts with your teen should be in low-risk areas, such as a large parking lot, where your teen can practice and demonstrate basic skills such as starting, stopping, backing, turning and parking.

Once your teen is comfortable handling the above basic skills, you can begin increasing the level of difficulty by allowing him or her to drive on roads with light traffic. Look for situations that will give your teen experience with various types of intersections, left- and right-hand turns, one-way streets and single- and multiple-lane roads.

As your teen's skill develops with moderate traffic situations, you can begin to introduce more difficult situations such as driving during rush hour and on the freeway. Other high-risk driving conditions which your teen will need to concentrate on include driving at night and in bad weather.

Keep the following points in mind as you coach your teen:

- Make sure everyone in the vehicle is wearing a safety belt. It is the law. Make sure your teen understands, that as a driver, it is his or her responsibility to make sure everyone is safely buckled up.
- Continue to monitor your teen's exposure to danger. Until your teen gains more experience and confidence, limit the amount of driving done during high-risk situations, such as at night, in an unfamiliar vehicle, with teen passengers, in bad weather, at rush hour or after school.
- Expect your teen driver to make some mistakes while driving. Use these experiences to help reinforce safe driving techniques.
- Speeding is the most common violation made by teen drivers and a major contributor to traffic crashes. Make sure your teen understands the importance of always obeying the speed limit and driving at a speed that is correct for the driving conditions.
- It is important for young drivers to learn to search the "big picture" on the road, in front of and behind the vehicle—to look for other vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists. Teach your teen to be alert for the unexpected when driving. **And as your teen's coach, you need to be continually scanning ahead for dangers, too.**
- Nighttime driving poses a special risk to teens because one-third of teen fatal traffic crashes occur at night. Make sure your teen knows how to drive safely in spite of the reduced visibility and glare from oncoming and following traffic. **If needed, extend the amount of supervised nighttime driving your teen does until you feel he or she is ready to drive at night alone.**
- Make sure your teen understands how to correctly operate the braking system of the vehicle he or she is driving. Vehicles equipped with anti-lock braking systems (ABS) require different emergency braking procedures than those without ABS.
- Misinterpreting a road sign leads to trouble. The shape, color and placement of words on signs all carry meaning. It is important for teens to understand and react to road signs correctly and in a timely fashion.

- Driving involves stressful situations. Help your teen learn to control emotions that lead to aggressive driving and “road rage.”
- It is important to keep focused when driving, especially when additional distractions are present, such as passengers in the vehicle.
- Michigan has a Zero Tolerance Law. It is illegal for anyone under age 21 to drink, possess or buy alcohol. Emphasize that drinking adversely affects driving capabilities, no matter how old or experienced the driver is.
- Research shows that falling asleep behind the wheel contributes to many traffic crashes. Remind your teen to never drive while tired. If your teen feels sleepy while driving, he or she should pull over to a safe spot to nap, or call for help.
- Current research has also shown that both hand-held and hands-free cell phone conversations impair driving. Remind your teen to pull the car over to a safe spot before using a cell phone.
- When driving, does your teen:
 - Search well ahead and to the sides?
 - Frequently check the rearview mirror?
 - Avoid driving in other vehicles’ blind spots?
 - Follow other vehicles at a safe distance by maintaining a safe following distance of at least four to five seconds?
 - Increase the space cushion and stay away from the “no-zones” when dealing with large vehicles?
 - Stay in the proper lane, making sure not to crowd vehicles on either side?
 - Come to a full stop at stop signs?
 - Match speed to road, traffic or weather conditions?
 - Signal all driving maneuvers correctly and in a timely manner, such as changing lanes, exiting the roadway and making turns?

As you coach your teen, continue to review the Parent-Teen Safe Driving Contract (see sample contract on the Secretary of State’s Web site at: www.Michigan.gov/sos). If you believe your teen is not ready to handle certain driving conditions, consider placing restrictions on:

- Number of passengers allowed—none, one, two or more?
- The number of trips.
- The length of a trip.
- Nighttime driving.
- Driving during certain weather or traffic conditions.
- Travel along new or unfamiliar routes.
- Travel to new or unfamiliar places.

YOUR AUTO INSURANCE

- Contact your auto insurance company to verify coverage for your teen driver and ask how to keep premium payments at a minimum.
- Remember, your driving record and your teen's driving record have a major influence on your insurance premium.

CHOOSING A VEHICLE FOR YOUR TEEN

When choosing a vehicle for your teen, consider the following:

- What safety features does the vehicle have? Older models may lack advanced features such as air bags, anti-lock brakes or traction control.
- The size and weight of the vehicle. Generally, larger, heavier vehicles are safer in crashes than small cars.
- Does your teen's driving skill and maturity match the intended vehicle? Fast and powerful vehicles can quickly overpower an inexperienced driver caught in the lure of speed and the open road. Resist the temptation to give your teen a "fast" car.

PROBATION:

A Word About the Michigan Department of State Probationary License Program

All newly licensed first-time drivers in Michigan are placed on probation for at least three years. The probationary licensing program is a way for the Secretary of State to monitor their driving performance. Probation and GDL are independent programs that work together to control a teen's driving risk.

Teen drivers under probation with tickets or crashes on their records may face personal reviews called driver assessment reexaminations. These reexaminations may cause a teen's license to be restricted, suspended or both. Should this occur, a teen's advancement to the next level of GDL will be delayed.

During the last 10 months of probation, tickets, at-fault crashes or license suspensions will extend the probationary period until the driver can complete 10 months of consecutive, violation-free driving.

Young drivers with unsatisfactory driving records will continue to be under probation until they prove themselves safe and competent drivers, even if they are no longer in GDL.

WHAT IS ZERO TOLERANCE?

Simply stated, Zero Tolerance means **any alcohol involvement by teens can result in the loss of their driver's license**. It is illegal for a teen to simply possess an alcoholic beverage. The beverage need not be opened to cause a minor to lose his or her driving privileges. Even an unopened bottle of alcohol found in a motor vehicle operated by a teen can result in a license suspension—even if the teen does not know it is there. Penalties for a first offense include:

- Up to a one-year license suspension
- Fines up to \$450
- Required participation in community service
- Points on the teen's driving record
- Payment of a \$125 license reinstatement fee

Additionally, there will be attorney fees to pay and automobile insurance premiums may increase.

Why is the law so tough on teens? Because the risk is so great that a teen driver will be involved in a crash. Mixing the inexperience of a teen driver with alcohol can be deadly.

Please note that a teen driver's Zero Tolerance conviction may also count as an alcohol offense under Michigan's Repeat Offender laws. One Zero Tolerance conviction is a misdemeanor carrying a 30-day driver's license restriction. Two Zero Tolerance convictions not in combination with any other alcohol offenses results in a 90-day driver's license suspension. A Zero Tolerance conviction in combination with another alcohol offense within seven years, or in combination with two other alcohol offenses within 10 years, results in a driver's license revocation with no hardship appeal. For more information about Repeat Offender laws, visit the Michigan Department of State's Web site at: www.Michigan.gov/sos.

HOW TEENS ARE INVOLVED IN CRASHES...

- The largest number of fatal crashes involving teen drivers are single-vehicle crashes, often with passengers in the vehicle who may cause distractions for the driver.
- Many teen crashes involve rolling the vehicle after straying onto the shoulder of the road or when swerving to miss an obstacle.
- Teen drivers are often involved in collisions with ditches and trees.
- Teen driver crashes are often the result of driving too fast.
- Teens are most likely to be involved in a fatal crash between the hours of 3 p.m. and midnight.
- Teens have a high rate of crashes on county and city roads.
- Teen drivers are involved in more crashes on Friday, Saturday and Sunday than any other days of the week.

This information is available from the Michigan Traffic Crash Facts book and can be found on the Office of Highway Safety Planning's Web site at www.michigan.gov/msp.

RESOURCE MATERIALS

Coaching Your Teen

The following resources may help you as you coach your teen:

Your teen's driver education textbook
and driver education instructor

Driving Skills Test Study Guide (SOS-360) available at any Secretary of
State branch office and online at www.Michigan.gov/sos

AAA National driver's education resource materials

Network of Employers for Traffic Safety's *The Novice Driver's Road Map*
Contact: Office of Highway Safety Planning at (517) 333-5322
(*The Novice Driver's Road Map* provides adult coaches with
a series of practice sessions for teen drivers.)

Traffic Safety Web Sites:

AAA Foundation For Traffic Safety
www.aaafoundation.org

AAA Michigan
www.autoclubgroup.com/michigan

Allstate Insurance
www.allstate.com

American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators
www.aamva.org

Insurance Institute for Highway Safety
www.hwysafety.org

Michigan Department of State
www.Michigan.gov/sos

Michigan Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association
www.adtsea.iup.edu/michigan

Michigan Resource Center for Health and Safety, Inc.
www.tsamichigan.org

Mothers Against Drunk Driving
www.madd.org

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
www.nhtsa.dot.gov

Network of Employers for Traffic Safety

www.trafficsafety.org

Office of Highway Safety Planning

www.michigan.gov/msp

Operation Lifesaver

www.oli.org

MICHIGAN'S GRADUATED LICENSE SYSTEM

<p>Driver Education Segment 1</p> <p>Minimum age of 14 years and 8 months</p> <p>Vision/health screening prior to behind-the-wheel experience</p> <p>24 hours of classroom</p> <p>Six hours behind-the-wheel experience</p> <p>Four hours behind-the-wheel observation time</p> <p>Written exam</p>	<p>Level 1 License</p> <p>No fee</p> <p>14 years, 9 months of age</p> <p>Vision exam</p> <p>Health standards</p> <p>Written approval of parents</p> <p>May drive only with parent or designated licensed adult age 21 or older</p>	<p>Preparation for Driver Education Segment 2</p> <p>Complete at least 30 hours of the required 50 hours of behind-the-wheel practice driving with parent, including two hours of the required 10 hours of night driving</p> <p>Held a valid Level 1 License for not less than three consecutive months</p>	<p>Driver Education Segment 2</p> <p>Six hours of classroom</p> <p>Written exam required (beginning in 2008)</p>	<p>Preparation for Driving Skills Test</p> <p>Complete what remains of the required 50 hours behind-the-wheel, including what remains of the 10 hours required night driving</p> <p>Review study guides</p>	<p>Driving Skills Test</p> <p>Fee will vary</p> <p>Minimum of six months at Level 1</p> <p>Vehicle inspection</p> <p>Off-road test</p> <p>On-road test</p>	<p>Level 2 License</p> <p>Fee required</p> <p>16 years of age</p> <p>90 days crash-and violation-free prior to application for Level 2 License</p> <p>May drive without supervision except from midnight to 5 a.m. Driving is permitted from midnight to 5 a.m. only if driving to and from employment or with a parent or designated adult age 21 or older</p>	<p>Level 3 License</p> <p>No fee</p> <p>17 years of age</p> <p>Minimum of six months at Level 2</p> <p>12 consecutive months of crash- and violation-free driving at Level 1/Level 2 prior to application for Level 3 License</p> <p>Full driving privileges with no restrictions</p>
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Minimum three-week class

Minimum of six months

Minimum of six months



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