

Co-pilot

A Guide for Parents and Guardians of New Drivers



Transportation and Infrastructure

Highway Safety Division

Minister's Message

As part of our efforts to improve the safety of all Island road users, the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure has designed this brochure to assist parents and other responsible individuals who accompany new drivers when they practice their driving skills.

It's imperative that new drivers acquire the necessary skills to be safe and competent behind the wheel. Learning to drive is an important milestone. As a supervising driver, you can help set the tone for a lifetime of safe driving by helping new drivers learn the skills they need to drive in a safe and responsible manner. Thorough preparation for the driving task is therefore essential. With your help we can ensure that they acquire these skills safely.

Thank you for taking time to read Co-Pilot. I am confident that you and your learning driver will find this brochure informative in understanding the challenges and responsibilities of driving.

Minister

Transportation and Infrastructure

This guide should be used to supplement the
Prince Edward Island Driver's Handbook.

Updated January 2023

**Please Read this
Co-pilot Brochure
Before
Signing Your
Consent of a
Minor's Driver's License.**

**Bring the
'signed'
Consent Form
and
the New Driver's Birth Certificate*
with you when you
come in for your
Written Appointment.**

* Please be advised that the Birth Certificate ***must*** be the "original" and not a printed copy.

The Consent Form can be found on page 13.

Co-pilot

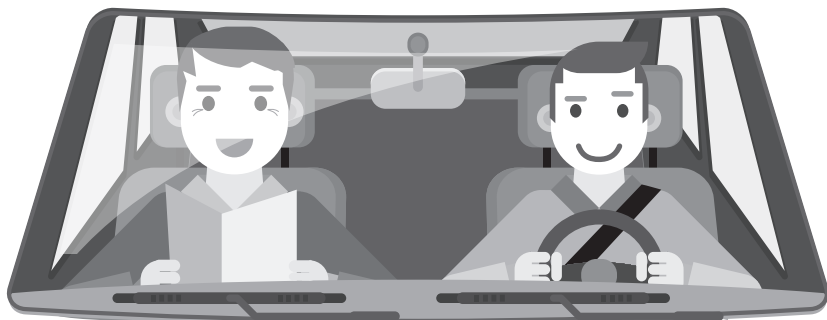
A Guide For Parents and Guardians of New Drivers

Introduction

Congratulations on another milestone in your new driver's life. The privilege of driving is a tremendous responsibility. This brochure is a useful tool that will provide you with valuable information on our responsibilities as a caring and supportive co-pilot.

The purpose of this pamphlet is to outline ways that you as a parent or “co-pilot”, can help your new driver. Helping the new driver will involve time, effort and patience on your part but it will be well rewarded; you will worry less, knowing that you assisted your new driver in developing a lifelong skill.

This brochure should be used together with the Prince Edward Island Driver's Handbook, which includes the rules of the road and basic driving instructions. The Co-pilot brochure is also designed for parents of new drivers enrolled in a Driver Education Program, and will be helpful to anyone who is a “co-pilot” to a new driver.



THE CO-PILOT'S RESPONSIBILITY

Be a Good Model

Young adults often imitate their parents' behaviour so set a good example whenever you drive. Obey all traffic laws, be courteous and drive safely.

Don't Drive After Consuming Drugs or Alcohol

Young people are more likely to drink and drive if they have seen their parents or role models doing so.

Use Seat Belts

Just as your new driver will mimic your bad habits, they will usually adopt your good habits, such as wearing a seat belt. No matter how short the trip, encourage your new driver to wear a seat belt. Teach your new driver to fasten the belt before starting the engine. If you wear a seat belt each time you get into the car, your new driver may do the same.

Seat belt fines issued to individuals in the Graduated Driver Licensing Program (GDL) will cause the individual's driving privileges to be suspended. Drivers in the GDL Program can also be charged if they have an unbuckled passenger.

Use Headlights or Daytime Running Lights

Many collisions happen simply because drivers fail to see approaching vehicles. When your headlights or daytime running lights are on, your chances of being involved in a collision are reduced by up to 25 percent.

The PEI Driver's Handbook

Refresh your memory by reviewing the Driver's Handbook. The rules of the road and driving techniques may have changed since you learned to drive.

CONSENT FORM - BEFORE YOU SIGN

Any person under 18 years of age in Prince Edward Island requires the signed consent of both parents or legal guardian(s) to receive a Class 7, or an Instruction Permit. As a parent or guardian and do not feel that your teenager is not ready to drive, you can and should withhold your consent. A consent can also be withdrawn at any time until the age of 18.

Before you give your consent, consider your teenager's:

Attitude

Attitude influences behaviour. The young person with a positive attitude toward pedestrians, people in authority (such as parents, teachers, police) and other road users will be a more safety-conscious driver. A good driver is not a perfect driver but one who is able to recognize that there is always more to learn and improvements to be made.

Social Responsibility

Adolescents who apply themselves to their school work, show willingness to help others and meet family obligations will be more likely to engage in responsible driving.

Intellectual Maturity

Anyone who wants to drive must be able to learn and apply the rules of the road. Beyond this, new drivers must understand the risks involved in driving, recognize the serious consequences of breaking the law and be prepared to act accordingly.



Risk-taking Behaviour

Research suggests that adolescents who engage in certain behaviours that place themselves or others in danger may be at greater risk of involvement in a serious collision.

Emotional Maturity

A person with poor emotional control should not be given the opportunity to vent anger and frustration behind the wheel of a car. Anyone who has problems with alcohol or other drugs should not consider driving; by consenting, you would be initiating a lethal combination.

Financial Resources

From liability insurance to car expenses, getting a license is about more than passing a driving test. Gas, regular upkeep of a vehicle and expenses for adequate collision insurance are just a few of the considerations to keep in mind. Use this as an opportunity to talk about the costs of buying and maintaining a car and setting long-term goals.

The Graduated Driver Licensing Program

The Graduated Driver Licensing Program (GDL) is a system of licensing that gives new drivers the opportunity to gradually move into higher risk driving situations after gaining experience in lower risk situations.

The GDL Program has three stages: Stage 1:(L), Stage 2:(G), and Stage 3:(G). When your new driver receives their Instruction Permit and enters stage 1, they can only drive with a supervising driver that holds a valid driver's license for at least four years.

No driver may apply for a Class 1, 2 or 4 Driver's License until they have successfully completed the GDL Program. GDL drivers in stage 3 may apply for a Class 3 driver's license if they are at least 18 years of age and held a Class 5 driver's license for (1) year.

DEVELOPING A SAFE DRIVER

Most young drivers strive for independence, control over their own lives, and acceptance by their friends and family. In our society, obtaining a driver's license often represents an important step in this direction. You can begin by preparing well in advance of the new driver's driving test. There are several things you and your teenager can do to make this a positive experience:

- ▶ By watching you, your teenager was learning to drive long before the first formal driving lesson. Share your experiences and concerns. Ask for your teenager's opinion and respect it.
- ▶ Driving a motor vehicle is an important responsibility. Decide whether your teenager has shown attitude and behaviours that demonstrate readiness to assume this responsibility. Establish conditions for permitting your teenager to obtain a Driver's License.
- ▶ The use of hand-held communication devices such as cell phones, tablets, etc. is prohibited for individuals in the Graduated Driver Licensing Program.
- ▶ In many incidences, parents choose to delay their teenager's application for the driving test longer than the mandatory 365-day time period (275 days if enrolled in a driver education



program). Some reasons for doing this are: more practice time is required, poor judgment, or poor control and technique. In any case, make sure your teenager is well prepared for the road test to avoid embarrassment or frustration should they not qualify.

- ▶ Determine the most practical method of driving instruction. You may decide that you are the best person to assist your son/daughter/child; however, it may be that you often become impatient. Perhaps you become anxious whenever someone else drives your car. In such cases, it would be best to have someone more suitable provide the early on-road training and practice sessions. You may wish to enroll your student in a certified driver education program.
- ▶ Formal lessons will not replace the requirement of follow-up behind-the-wheel practice that a good driving school will expect of their students.
- ▶ Remember, what you teach your new driver should correspond with what is taught by the driver educator in the driver education program. If your new driver insists that your instructions are different from the driver education program, contact the driver educator to discuss this matter.
- ▶ Driver education programs require all students to have a minimum of 25 hours classroom training, 10 hours behind-the-wheel instruction, and six hours observation time. When the program is completed, the driving school will conduct the road test for a Class 5 driver's license unless a student has been randomly selected by the PEI Highway Safety Division for a road test and evaluation.
- ▶ Read the Driver's Handbook which is available from any Access PEI office or online at :

www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/publication/drivers-handbook
(follow the Graduated Driver Licensing Program links)

ROAD TEST

The purpose of the road test is to measure the new drivers ability to operate the vehicle properly and safely under typical driving conditions. Not qualifying for a Driver's License results from too many mistakes, a law violation or a dangerous action.

An individual who is not successful on the road test must wait a minimum of two weeks before trying again. If your new driver does not pass the test, please review the road test with them to help them understand where more practice or experience is needed. If there is something you do not understand, contact the driver examiner. You may decide that your new driver requires a longer waiting period than two weeks to better prepare for another test.

After Passing Road Test

Now that your new driver has earned a Driver's License, remember it takes several years to develop good driving habits that will last a lifetime. Research suggests that inexperience contributes to collisions and traffic violations.

Under the Graduated Driver Licensing Program (GDL), the newly licensed driver is on probation for a period of two years and monitored closely by Highway Safety Division for violations under the *Highway Traffic Act*, Criminal Code and accident involvement.

A conviction for failure to wear a seat belt will result in the suspension of driving privileges of a driver in the GDL Program.

1st offence - 30 days

2nd offence - 90 days

The new driver may also be charged if a passenger is not wearing a seat belt.

The accumulation of six, or more demerit points during the first year of their probation results in a one-month suspension of driving privileges. During the second year of probation, the accumulation of nine or more demerit points also results in the suspension of driving privileges.

Graduated Licensing Approach

Stage 1 All drivers who received their Instruction Permit (Class 7) must wait a minimum of 365 days before taking their road test. This period is reduced to 275 days if enrolled in a certified driver education program.

Supervising drivers providing instruction to a beginner driver with an Instruction Permit must have held a valid Driver's License for at least **four** years.

Stage 1 drivers are prohibited from operating motor vehicles between the hours of 1 a.m. and 5 a.m.. There are no exemptions for the driving curfew in Stage 1; **however, this does not apply to individuals who are 21 years of age or older.**

Stage 1 drivers **cannot use** a hand-held cellular telephone, headphones, mp3 player or any other hand-held electronic device while operating or having care and control of a motor vehicle.

Stage 1 drivers are required to have a Learner's Decal displayed on any motor vehicle they operate. The decal is a bright yellow sticker with a large black "L" in the center. The Stage 1 driver will receive this decal at the time their photo is taken for their Instruction Permit. The decal is to be placed on the inside of the windshield directly above the Motor Vehicle Inspection sticker. There is no cost for the decal and it is made of a material which allows it to be removed and transferred to any vehicle you are driving during this first stage.

Stage 2 When a new driver passes the road test, they will be issued a Class 5 driver's license. A new identifying decal is required to be displayed on the windshield. The decal is a bright yellow sticker with a large black "G" in the center. The Stage 2 section of the GDL Program lasts for one year.

Passenger Restrictions:

All newly licensed drivers holding a Class 5 Driver's License (one who has held a Driver's License less than two years,) will be subject to the following passenger restrictions.

A newly licensed driver, regardless of age, is restricted to one non-family member as a passenger. All other passengers must be members of the newly licensed driver's immediate family.

There cannot be more passengers than the number of seat belts in the vehicle. New drivers can be fined for any passenger not wearing a seat belt in a vehicle you are driving.

Stage 2 drivers are prohibited from operating motor vehicles between the hours of 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. The Stage 2 driver may apply for an exemption from the driving curfew for work purposes and may also operate a motor vehicle between the hours of 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. if they are accompanied by a licensed driver who has held a Driver's License for at least four years and the accompanying driver does not have a BAC level of .05 or more. **This does not apply to individuals who are 21 years of age or older.**

Exemption forms are available at all Access PEI locations and online at: www.princeedwardisland.ca/GDL (follow the Graduated Driver Licensing Program links).

No Stage 2 driver shall use a hand-held cellular telephone, headphones, mp3 player or any other hand-held electronic device while operating or having care and control of a motor vehicle.

Stage 2 drivers are required to have the Graduated Decal displayed on any motor vehicle they operate. The Stage 2 driver will receive this decal at the time their photo is taken for their Class 5 driver's license. There is no cost for the decal.

Stage 2 drivers will be suspended for any seatbelt or passenger restriction fines they receive.

1st offence - 30 days

2nd offence - 90 days

If the new driver fails to comply with the above restrictions, any suspension time will be added to the one-year duration of Stage 2, thus extending the period of the GDL program.

When the GDL driver has spent the appropriate time in Stage 2, they automatically graduate into Stage 3.

Stage 3 The new driver will spend 365 days in Stage 3.

Stage 3 drivers are required to have a Graduated Decal displayed on any motor vehicle they operate. This is the same decal the driver received for Stage 2. There is no cost for the decal.

A newly licensed driver, regardless of age, will require all passengers in the vehicle to be restricted to the number of seat belts.

No Stage 3 driver shall use a hand-held cellular telephone, headphones, mp3 player or any other hand-held electronic device while operating or having care and control of a motor vehicle.

Stage 3 drivers will be suspended for any seatbelt or passenger restriction fines they receive and suspension times will be added to the one year duration of Stage 3, thus extending the period of the GDL program.

1st offence - 30 days

2nd offence - 90 days

DECALS

If a decal becomes lost or destroyed during any of the GDL stages, a replacement decal may be acquired at any Access PEI location. There is no charge for the replacement decal.

BLOOD ALCOHOL CONTENT

“0” BAC for Graduated Drivers

All new drivers under 19 years of age or drivers in the GDL Program (regardless of age) and all drivers under the age of 22 that received their driver's license after September 16, 2017 must have a “0” blood alcohol content (BAC) when driving.

An offence will result in a 24-hour roadside suspension and a 90-day administrative prohibition. If the BAC level is .08 or more, OR for failure or refusal to supply a breath or blood sample OR if impaired by a drug or combination of a drug and alcohol, the driver will be charged under the Criminal Code of Canada and face further cancellations of his /her/their driving privileges.

Driving while disqualified is also an offence and a conviction will result in a six-month cancellation to be applied consecutively to the period of the existing suspension, cancellation or disqualification.

A new driver must be encouraged to take responsibility for safe driving.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is extremely important for new drivers to understand their responsibility and it is just as critical for parents or guardians to allow the novice or newly licensed driver to drive at every opportunity possible under supervision. Whenever possible, each time you get into your vehicle with a novice or newly licensed driver, encourage them to do the driving.

Take positive steps toward prevention of bad driving habits, praise newly acquired, safe driving skills and remind the new driver of ways to improve weaker areas. **Most of all, continue to practice driving together.**

**Please consult our website for information on acceptable documents:
www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/transportation-and-infrastructure/getting-an-instruction-drivers-permit-in-pe**



CONSENT FORM

I, _____

Instruction Permit holder (*Signature*)

understand and accept the responsibility of holding a Class 7 Driver's License by operating in a safe and courteous manner.

I also consent that as an Instruction Permit holder or as a newly licensed driver enrolled in, or having completed a driver education program, I will participate if selected, in a road test evaluation by Highway Safety.

Parents' Consent

I, _____

Father/Legal Guardian (*signature*)

and, _____

Mother/Legal Guardian (*signature*)

☐ If sole custodian, check here.

I/We have read the Co-pilot brochure and do hereby approve that a Driver's License be issued to the above-named person who has not reached the age of 18.

I/We consent that if my newly licensed driver is enrolled in or has completed a driver education program, he/she/they will participate, if selected, in a road test evaluation by Highway Safety.

I/We also agree to give my new driver, while on their Instruction Permit, every opportunity to practice their skills behind the wheel.

Information on this form is collected pursuant to section 73(1)(m) of the *Highway Traffic Act* of Prince Edward Island.

**The Co-pilot Parental/Guardian
Consent Form**

Transportation and Infrastructure / Highway Safety Division

PO Box 2000
Charlottetown, PE
Tel: (902) 368-5271
Fax: (902) 368-6269

PO Box 2063
Summerside, PE
Tel: (902) 432-2714
Fax: (902) 432-2529

www.princeedwardisland.ca/driverpermit

Highway Safety Head Office

33 Riverside Drive, Charlottetown, PE

Phone: 902-368-5271

Access PEI locations

Access PEI Alberton: 16 Dufferin Street

Access PEI Charlottetown: 33 Riverside Drive

Access PEI Montague: 41 Wood Islands Road

Access PEI O'Leary: 45 East Drive

Access PEI Souris: 15 Green Street

Access PEI Summerside: 120 Heather Moyse Drive

Access PEI Tignish: 103 School Street

Access PEI Wellington: 48 Mill Road

A list of Access PEI locations can be found online here:

www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/transportation-and-infrastructure/access-pei-locations

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