

*State of New Hampshire*

# DRIVER'S MANUAL



**DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY  
DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLES  
CONCORD, NH 03305**



Christopher T. Sununu - Governor



**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU  
Governor

Dear Applicant,

I wish you the best of luck as you start the journey in obtaining a New Hampshire Driver License. This manual will help you not only learn the rules of the road, but will guide you through information that is specific to New Hampshire, such as how to drive in weather conditions that can change at a moment's notice.

Having a Driver License in New Hampshire is a privilege, and comes with the responsibility of keeping yourself and your neighbors safe from harm.

There is a lot of information in the pages ahead, but there are a few things I would like to specifically mention:

- Driving requires your full attention; and texting and driving is not only unsafe, it is illegal.
- All drivers and passengers under the age of 18 must wear a seatbelt; however, it is advisable for all drivers and passengers, regardless of age, to wear their seatbelt.
- If you are under the age of 21 consuming alcohol is illegal and if any amount of alcohol is found in the vehicle you are driving or if any tests indicate that you are driving under the influence of alcohol, you will be subject to having your driving privileges suspended or revoked.
- Always be aware of unseen challenges, such as driver fatigue.

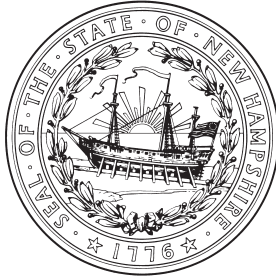
Please remember that the information you learn in this manual is not only vitally important for you to know to obtain your driver license, but to be a safe and responsible driver throughout your lifetime. I look forward to seeing you on the road!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chitch T. Sununu".

Christopher T. Sununu  
Governor

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# FOREWORD

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Driving a motor vehicle on public streets and highways is a privilege. In order that you may fully enjoy the privilege of driving, it is necessary that you know what laws, rules and regulations exist. Further, you must observe them at all times or run the risk of having your driving privileges suspended or revoked.

This manual is prepared to acquaint you with the rules and regulations that directly or indirectly affect you as the operator of a motor vehicle. Study it carefully and you will be well prepared to take the New Hampshire driver examination.

Remember, a good driving personality is related to your attitude. You must respect the law, your own rights, and the rights of others.

Driving is a very complex task that requires your full attention. No one knows when an emergency situation will arise. How quickly you react to the situation depends on your alertness. The stopping of the vehicle will depend on vehicle speed, highway conditions, vehicle condition, and your condition.

No one wants to become involved in an automobile crash, yet every year the Division of Motor Vehicles processes over 40,000 crash reports. The safest drivers are those who are always alert and attentive to their driving.

The majority of crashes occur as the result of errors in driver judgment, not defective equipment or poor road conditions.

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# PART ONE

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## *General Information*

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

This manual covers many of the most important points of New Hampshire traffic laws, rules and regulations, but it does not give the exact wording of the laws and it does not list all of them. For exact wording of all traffic laws, refer to the New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated. Laws, rules and regulations may have been changed since the publication of this manual.

If you are a resident of New Hampshire and want to drive a motor vehicle, you must have a valid New Hampshire driver license.

### **MOTOR VEHICLE LICENSING LOCATIONS**

Currently there are locations throughout the State where driver licenses are issued. Applicants for a New Hampshire driver license should be prepared to furnish two (2) positive means of identification to the Licensing Representative. The “required driver license documentation” can be found on the DMV website at [www.nh.gov/dmv](http://www.nh.gov/dmv).

Applicants for a New Hampshire driver license need only go to the nearest location, prepare the proper application and pay the fee. Applicants not requiring a written and road test will be processed in turn. If you need a written and road test, you can go to any DMV office and take a written test (computer based) any time between 8:00am and 3:30pm. You do not have to make an appointment for a written test. If you pass the written test you will be scheduled for a road test. Many times the road test cannot be scheduled the same day as the written test.

Commercial Driver License (CDL) applicants please see Section 19 of this manual.

Renewal applicants will be sent a notice informing them to go to any licensing location to apply, pay for, and receive a renewed driver license. Applicants with an Operator or Operator Motorcycle License may be eligible to renew on-line.

Whenever you find it necessary to contact the Division of Motor Vehicles on a matter pertaining to your driver license, motor vehicle registration, disability plates or placards, motor vehicle inspection, motor vehicle title, motor vehicle crash or driver education, please furnish the following information for proper identification and prompt service.

**A Driver Licensing (telephone 227-4020):**

1. Driver's full complete name (first, middle and last).
2. Driver's address (mailing and legal).
3. Driver's month, day and year of birth.

**B Driver Education (telephone 227-4075):**

1. Individual's name, address and date of birth.
2. Driver education school and date of completion.

**C Motor Vehicle Registration, or disability plates or placards (telephone 227-4030):**

1. Owner's full name.
2. Owner's address.
3. Current plate number.
4. Make, model and vehicle identification number (VIN) of vehicle.

**D Motor Vehicle Inspection (telephone 227-4120):**

1. Inspection sticker number.
2. Inspection station number and location.
3. Explanation of problem or situation.

**E Vehicle Title (telephone 227-4150):**

1. Titled owner's full name.
2. Titled owner's full address.
3. Complete description of vehicle, including (VIN).

**F Motor Vehicle Crash (Financial Responsibility - telephone 227-4010):**

1. Exact date of crash.
2. Name(s) of all parties involved.
3. Dates of birth, if possible.

**G Speech and Hearing impaired:**

Residents may utilize the TDD access relay NH 1-800-735-2964.

**H DMV Web-site:** [www.NH.gov/safety/divisions/dmv](http://www.NH.gov/safety/divisions/dmv)

## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. As an applicant for a New Hampshire driver license you must furnish two (2) \_\_\_\_\_.
2. If you are a resident of New Hampshire and want to drive a motor vehicle, you must have a valid New Hampshire \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Applicants who are applying for their New Hampshire driver license may be eligible to \_\_\_\_\_ on-line.



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# PART TWO

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## *Driver Licensing Information*

### **WHO NEEDS A NEW HAMPSHIRE DRIVER LICENSE?**

- New Hampshire residents who wish to drive a motor vehicle.
- New residents - people who move to New Hampshire - are allowed up to 60 days to obtain a New Hampshire driver license.

### **WHO DOES NOT NEED A NEW HAMPSHIRE DRIVER LICENSE?**

- Non-residents who hold a valid driver license from their resident state.
- Members of the Armed Forces stationed in New Hampshire who hold a valid driver license from their home state.
- Foreign citizens who are strictly tourists in the United States and hold a valid driver license from their home country accompanied by an international license issued by the home country.
- Students who are enrolled full time at a school or college in New Hampshire and have a valid driver license from their home state.
- NOTE: Non-resident drivers must be at least 16 years of age and may drive only those classes of vehicles that their license allows.
- (EXCEPTION: If your privilege to drive in New Hampshire is under suspension or revocation, you are NOT allowed to drive in this state with an out-of-state license under any condition.)

### **AGE REQUIREMENT**

You must be at least 16 years of age to get a New Hampshire driver license. Persons 16 and 17 years of age may get a New Hampshire driver license only if she or he has passed an approved driver education program. Persons under 18 years of age cannot get a commercial driver license.

### **YOUTH OPERATOR LICENSE**

- Any person 16 years of age or older and under 21 years of age will be issued a YOUTH OPERATOR license. All youth operator licenses will expire on the holder's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.
- In addition to any other restrictions, the holder of a YOUTH OPERATOR license who is under 18 years of age:

1. Shall not operate a motor vehicle between the hours of 1:00 a.m. and 4:00 a.m.
2. During the first 6 months after issuance of the license, the holder shall not operate a motor vehicle with more than one passenger less than 25 years of age who is not a member of the holder's family unless accompanied by a licensed responsible adult who is at least 25 years of age.
3. Shall not operate a motor vehicle with more passengers than there are seat belts/safety restraints in a vehicle.

## **HOW TO APPLY FOR A DRIVER LICENSE**

Applications for a driver license are available at any office of the Division of Motor Vehicles or online at [www.nh.gov/dmv](http://www.nh.gov/dmv). This application must be completely filled out and presented to the clerk with the proper fee. Applicants under the age of 18 wishing to obtain a motorcycle license shall successfully complete a program authorized pursuant to RSA 263:34-b.

Persons under 18 years of age must also include a driver education certificate, which you will get from the driver education instructor and a Parent or Guardian Authorization certificate (DSMV 38) which you will also get from the driver education instructor or from the Division of Motor Vehicles.

If you are applying for your first motorcycle license at the same time as you apply for an operator or commercial driver license, you must complete two applications and pay the proper fees.

## **PRACTICE DRIVING**

A person who has not held a prior license may practice driving a non-commercial vehicle on New Hampshire roadways provided s/he has attained the age of 15½ carries proof of age, and is accompanied in the front seat by a parent, legal guardian, or other licensed adult who is 25 years of age or older.

A person who is under 18 years of age is required to complete 40 hours of supervised practice driving, in addition to the 10 hours required by driver education. The 40 hours must be logged and supervised by a parent, or legal guardian, or if there is no parent or legal guardian, a licensed adult over the age of 25. At least 10 hours of the supervised driving time shall be completed during the period from ½ hour after sunset to ½ before sunrise. Motorcycle license applicants are exempt from the additional 40 hours of driving time, provided s/he successfully completed the Motorcycle Rider Education Training, offered by the Division of Motor Vehicles.

## **WHAT TO BRING TO YOUR DRIVER TEST**

- All driver licenses issued to you by any state.
- Two forms of positive identification: documents that show your name, address, and date of birth (in most cases a photo license from another state and an original birth certificate is acceptable).
- A vehicle which is legally registered, inspected (if required) and in safe running condition. The vehicle must be of the proper class for the type of license you are being tested for.
- A licensed driver to drive the test vehicle for you to and from the testing site. That person should remain at the test site until the road test has been completed. (If you are properly licensed by another state or country and have a valid International License issued in that country you may drive yourself to the testing site.)

## **ONE LICENSE CONCEPT**

If you hold an out-of-state license, you will not be issued your New Hampshire driver license until such time as you turn in any and all out-of-state licenses which you hold. No person shall hold more than one valid driver license at any time. If you are under the age of 18, you must have completed driver education and training that meets the State's minimum standards.

If your license or privileges are under suspension or revocation in any other state at the time you apply for a New Hampshire license, your application will not be accepted until you can prove that the licensing authority in that state has restored your privileges to drive and that your license is no longer under suspension or revocation. All applications for a New Hampshire driver license are screened through the Problem Driver Pointer System.

- Testing is conducted between the hours of 8am - 3:30pm. All testing is concluded by 4pm.

## **WHAT WILL THE DRIVER TEST INCLUDE?**

- A vision test.
- A knowledge test.
- A road test.

### **Vision Test**

The vision test will measure how clearly you see. You will be asked to look into an eye machine and read a series of letters or numbers.

To pass, you must be able to read the 20/40 vision line with both eyes. If you are blind in one eye, you must read the 20/30 vision line.

If you must wear glasses or contact lenses to pass the vision test, you will have to wear them when you drive. If you fail the vision test, no other part of the driver test will be given. You will have to visit an eye doctor to see if your vision can be corrected so that you can pass the vision test at a later date.

### **Computer based knowledge test**

The knowledge test is a 40 question multiple choice test. You will have 40 minutes to complete the test. The test is administered on a touch screen monitor, and no special knowledge of computers is required. Each question is displayed along with four possible answers. You must determine which one is correct and identify your choice by touching the letter on the screen which corresponds to your choice. If you miss more than 8 of the questions the test will automatically terminate and you may request an appointment to retest not sooner than ten days from the current date. There are no trick questions on the test and only one answer is correct. Please study the manual carefully. Automated oral testing with the use of headphones is available for persons who do not read English. If you wish to take advantage of this feature please notify the licensing representative at the time of your test.

If you hold a valid out-of-state driver license, you do not normally have to take the written test. If you applied for a license to drive a different class of vehicle, you will have to take the written test for that class of vehicle and a road test. If your out-of-state license is not valid, a written and road test may be required. If your driver license was issued by a foreign country, a written and road test may be required.

### **Road test**

The road test allows the Licensing Examiner to:

- Measure your skill to drive a motor vehicle properly and safely on the road.
- Judge whether or not you need more practice or training before you get a driver license.
- Tell you what driving mistakes you are making and how to correct them.

Obey the instructions you are given by the Licensing Examiner. You will not be told to do anything that is against the law. No tricks will be played on you. The Licensing Examiner cannot coach you during the road test. If you have questions, try to ask him/her before or after the road test.

During the road test, you will be scored on:

- Skill in handling the vehicle in traffic.
- Driving habits.
- Working knowledge and understanding of traffic signs and rules of the road.
- How well you physically, mentally and emotionally handle the actual stress of driving in traffic.
- Attitude toward driving and personal and public safety.

The road test is a sample of your driving skills. The average test will take 15 to 20 minutes.

To pass the road test, you must be able to show you can drive a motor vehicle with good control. You must possess certain basic driving skills and be able to demonstrate your ability to share the road with safety and courtesy.

No person except you and the authorized Division of Motor Vehicles employee can ride in the vehicle during the road test.

The Licensing Examiner has the right to require ANY applicant to take the road test.

### **If you pass the test**

As soon as you pass all 3 parts of the driver test, you will be issued a 60 day paper temporary license. The permanent license will be mailed to you within 60 days.

### **If you fail the test**

If you fail any part of the driver test, the remainder of the test will not be given. A retest will be scheduled at the convenience of the division.

## **CLASSIFIED LICENSE SYSTEM**

Vehicles in New Hampshire are classified according to the manufacturer's gross vehicle weight rating and body style. Drivers must have the proper class of license to drive any vehicle.

The New Hampshire classified license system is broken down as follows:

Commercial driver license classes (see section Nineteen)

**Class A - CDL-A**

**Class B - CDL-B**

**Class C - CDL-C**

**Class D - Operator** - An operator license allows you to drive a vehicle with a gross vehicle weight of 26,000 pounds or less if you do not tow a trailer with a gross weight of over 10,000 pounds, transport hazardous materials or drive a bus designed to transport more than 15 persons, including the driver.

**Motorcycle** - Allows you to drive motorcycles, mopeds and 3 wheeled motorcycles. If an operator or commercial license is also marked “Motorcycle”, it allows you to drive the motorcycle as well as the vehicle that the classified license permits.

**3-Wheeled Motorcycle** - Allows you to drive only a 3 wheeled motorcycle if you take your road test on the 3 wheeled motorcycle. If you took your road test on a conventional 2 wheeled motorcycle you can operate a 3 wheeled motorcycle.

**Motor-driven cycle** - Allows you to drive any motorcycle, moped, motor scooter, and bicycle with motor attached which has no more than five (5) horsepower only.

**Moped** - Allows you to drive a moped only. To be registered as a “moped”, a vehicle must:

- Not require the driver to shift gears.
- Have a motor not more than 2 horsepower or 50 cc. in size.
- Not be able to go faster than 30 MPH on level ground.

You do not need a special motorcycle license to drive a moped. You can drive a moped with your operator, CDL, motorcycle, motor-driven cycle or moped only license.

### **License restrictions**

Under some conditions the privilege of driving a motor vehicle must be restricted. Restrictions placed on a driver license include:

- “B” - Corrective lenses
- “C” - Mechanical aid
- “D” - Prosthetic aid
- “E” - Automatic transmission
- “F” - Outside mirror
- “G” - Limit to daylight only
- “Z” - Alcohol Interlock Device required

### **License expiration**

Your license is valid for 5 birthdays from the date of issuance. The expiration date is shown on your driver license.

### **License renewal**

Approximately 2 months before your driver license is due to expire, you will be sent a reminder notice in the mail.

This reminder will include instructions on how to renew your driver license. If you are away from New Hampshire and cannot return before your license expires, you must notify us in writing.

You will not get your renewal reminder if you have changed your address and did not tell the Division of Motor Vehicles of the change, or if your driver license is under revocation or suspension.

Renewal of your driver license is your responsibility. If you do not get a renewal reminder in the mail, you should go to any licensing office of the Division of Motor Vehicles to begin the process of renewing your driver license.

New Hampshire residents who hold a New Hampshire driver license and are on active duty in the Armed Forces for 2 or more years may renew his/her driver license free of charge. An affidavit signed by a commissioned officer stating the date of the end of your active duty must be sent along with your application.

Affidavit forms are available at any Division of Motor Vehicles licensing location and online at [www.nh.gov/dmv](http://www.nh.gov/dmv).

### **Lost license**

If your license is lost or destroyed, you must apply for a duplicate license.\* Applications can be obtained at any Division of Motor Vehicles licensing location substation and will be processed immediately upon completion.

\*No more than 3 duplicate driver licenses will be issued for the term of your driver license.

### **Change of name or address**

The law states that you must tell the Division of Motor Vehicles in writing within (10) days if you change your name or address. ALWAYS INCLUDE THE NAME, ADDRESS AND DATE OF BIRTH LISTED ON YOUR CURRENT DRIVER LICENSE AND THE CORRECTED NAME AND/OR ADDRESS. Name change documents must be presented at any DMV office to make a name change.

## **NON-DRIVER IDENTIFICATION CARD**

The Division of Motor Vehicles will issue a photo identification card to any New Hampshire resident who is 12 years of age or older and who does not have a valid New Hampshire driver license.

You may apply for a non-driver identification card at all Division of Motor Vehicle licensing locations. This identification card is valid for 5 birthdays from the date of issuance.

An applicant for a non-driver identification card must provide the same documentation required for a Driver License. A Social Security card or valid school ID may be substituted in the event that no out of state license exists.

## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. The New Hampshire vision test requires that you can read letters and obtain a reading of 20/\_\_\_\_\_.
2. Upon change of your name or address you must notify the \_\_\_\_\_ within \_\_\_\_\_ days.
3. A moped is a motor driven cycle with a motor of not over 50cc's or 2hp that does not require the driver to shift gears and capable of speed not over \_\_\_\_\_ mph on level ground.
4. A person with sight in one eye must read 20/\_\_\_\_\_ to get a driver license.
5. An operator license allows you to drive a vehicle with a GVWR of \_\_\_\_\_ or less if you do not tow a trailer with a GVWR over \_\_\_\_\_ except a school bus, or any bus that is designed to transport more than 15 passengers including the driver.
6. In addition to any other restrictions, the holder of a youth operator license who is under the age of eighteen shall not operate a motor vehicle between the hours of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Individuals holding an out of state license shall not be issued their New Hampshire driver license until they \_\_\_\_\_ their out of state License.
8. A motor driven cycle has an engine which produces no greater than \_\_\_\_\_ horsepower.
9. A "B" restriction on a New Hampshire driver license means that the driver must \_\_\_\_\_.
10. An "E" restriction on a New Hampshire driver license means that an \_\_\_\_\_ must be used.
11. New residents are allowed \_\_\_\_\_ days to register their vehicles in New Hampshire.
12. To operate a motorcycle you must have a \_\_\_\_\_.
13. What is the youngest age one may legally practice drive in New Hampshire? \_\_\_\_\_
14. One who is practice driving must be accompanied in the front seat by a \_\_\_\_\_ driver who is at least \_\_\_\_\_ years old.



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# PART THREE

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## *Motor Vehicle Title and Registration*

### MOTOR VEHICLE TITLE

A vehicle must have a title before it can be registered in New Hampshire. Questions most often asked about titles are:

**Q. *What is a title?***

A. A title is a legal document stating who owns a motor vehicle.

**Q. *Why do I need a title?***

A. To name the owner(s) of a vehicle and to show any liens (debts) on the vehicle. It is like the deed of a house.

**Q. *How do I apply for a title?***

A. If the vehicle is bought from a private person, the town or city clerk will complete the title application. If the vehicle is bought from a licensed New Hampshire dealer, the dealer will complete the title application and give you a copy that you will need when you register the vehicle.

**Q. *What papers do I need?***

- A. 1. For a used vehicle: previous owner's title properly assigned to you.  
2. For a new vehicle: manufacturer's certificate of origin properly assigned to you.

**Q. *Who is the title given to?***

A. If you are the owner and there is no lien on the vehicle, you will receive the title. If you have borrowed money to pay for the vehicle, the lending institute that lent you the money will get the title. When the loan is paid, the lending institute will send the title to you.

**Q. *Where do I keep the Certificate of Title?***

A. In a safe place, never in the vehicle.

**Q. *Which vehicles do not need a title?***

A. Currently no title is needed for:

Any motor vehicle whose manufacturer's model year is older than 15 years, except heavy trucks and truck-tractors whose gross vehicle weight exceeds 18,000 pounds.

**Q. *What should I do if my title is stolen, lost, destroyed or mutilated?***

- A. You should make application at once for a duplicate title. Send in your mutilated or illegible Certificate of Title with the application, along with the proper fee.

## **REGISTRATION**

### **Motor vehicle**

If you are a New Hampshire resident, your vehicle must be registered in New Hampshire. New residents are given 60 days from the date they move to New Hampshire to register their vehicles. To do this, you must first visit your town or city clerk to pay the town or city permit fee for the vehicle and to obtain your registration permit. The documents that you must have with you at the time of the visit to the town or city clerk are:

- Proof of residency.
- Proof of ownership of the vehicle.
- Proof of ID.

Once you have the registration permit from the town or city clerk, you may take it along with the proper registration fee to any Motor Vehicle substation listed in this book or to the Motor Vehicle office in Concord. Most town and city clerks are authorized Municipal Agents for the Division, which will allow you to complete the transaction at the town or city clerk's office.

You may mail in your registration permit together with the proper fee to: Division of Motor Vehicles, Department of Safety, 23 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03305.

**DO NOT SEND CASH. SEND CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO "STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE - MV". BECAUSE OF TIME DELAYS IN MAILING, DO NOT USE THE MAIL IF IT IS AFTER THE FIFTEENTH OF THE MONTH.**

All vehicles registered and titled in the name of an individual (not a company or corporation) will expire on the last day of the owner's month of birth.

Vehicles registered to a company or corporation are registered according to the expiration months set by the Director of Motor Vehicles. The shortest registration period may be for 5 months and the longest for 16 months, depending on when the owner first registers the vehicle and the expiration date. All later registrations for the same vehicle by the same owner will be for 12 months.

If you are issued 2 number plates, both must be displayed - one at the front, and one at the rear of the vehicle. The rear plate must not be obscured by trailer hitch or other device.

### **Motorcycles and motor-driven cycles**

To register a motorcycle in New Hampshire, the process is the same as for motor vehicles. They are first processed through your local city or town clerk and then completed at the Division of Motor Vehicles, at a motor vehicle substation or with a municipal agent.

### **Mopeds**

Mopeds have the same registration requirements as other motor vehicles, but the entire transaction is handled by the Division of Motor Vehicles. For a new registration or a renewal, you provide the necessary documents to the Division of Motor Vehicles, or at a motor vehicle substation. Municipal agents can renew a moped registration, but cannot process a new registration.

### **Trailers**

To register a trailer in New Hampshire, the regulations are the same as for other motor vehicles, and require you to initiate the process through your local city or town clerk, and complete it through the Division of Motor Vehicles in person or by mail at a motor vehicle substation, or with a municipal agent.

## **USER OF FUEL LICENSE**

If your vehicle is powered by an alternate energy source such as solar, propane, LPG gas, etc., you do not pay a fuel tax at the pumps. Any alternate energy vehicle prepays an annual fee at the time of registration.

Any New Hampshire registered vehicle requiring an apportioned plate should contact the Road Toll Administration for fuel tax information at the Department of Safety, 33 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03303 or telephone (603) 271-2311.

## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Vehicles (except heavy trucks) do not need a title if they are more than \_\_\_\_\_ years old.
2. A legal document showing legal ownership of a vehicle is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
3. If a vehicle is purchased through a private sale, how does one apply for the document answered on question 2 above? \_\_\_\_\_
4. In the case of all private passenger vehicles registered by an individual, the registration expires annually on \_\_\_\_\_.
5. To register a motor vehicle in New Hampshire you must first pay the municipal fee at the town/city \_\_\_\_\_ office.

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# PART FOUR

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## *Vehicle Equipment*

### OFFICIAL INSPECTION

#### **Motor vehicles**

Vehicles must be inspected once a year and the month of inspection shall be the owner's month of birth.

Trucks with a gross vehicle weight of more than 18,000 pounds and school buses with a gross vehicle weight of more than 10,000 pounds are required to be inspected twice a year during the owner's month of birth and 6 months later.

Vehicles that are owned by a company or corporation must be inspected in the month set by the Director of Motor Vehicles.

No person, company or corporation who has registered and had a vehicle inspected with temporary plates is required to have the vehicle inspected after regular plates have been obtained until the vehicle's next regular renewal.

Vehicles must be properly built and equipped before they can be driven on the road. It is up to the owner of each vehicle to keep it in safe condition. Motor vehicle law calls for the inspection of each vehicle to assure that only safe vehicles are driven on our roads. Vehicles are inspected to find safety hazards before a crash occurs.

There are more than 2,500 Official Inspection Stations in New Hampshire. Each one serves as an agent of the Director of Motor Vehicles. To locate one, look for the large "Official Inspection Station" sign outside the building.

To have your vehicle inspected, you should make an appointment with an Official Inspection Station.

After inspection, if the vehicle passes, an official sticker will be placed on your vehicle windshield.

If your vehicle does not pass an inspection, repairs or adjustments will have to be made to satisfy inspection requirements. The cost of inspection charged by inspection stations is not regulated by the state, but the fee is required to be posted in a conspicuous location at each station.

These are the major items checked during inspection which must meet State inspection standards before your vehicle can pass inspection:

- Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) must not be removed, defaced, obliterated or changed.
- Rear view mirrors must not be cracked, broken, obstructed or have sharp edges.
- Horn must be loud enough to be heard from 200 feet away.
- Windshield wipers and blades must be in good working condition.
- Defroster fan must work and defroster must blow heated air on the windshield.
- Turn signals, headlights, rear lights, stop lights, and plate light must work properly and all lenses must be of the proper color and type.
- The vehicle must have a foot brake and a parking brake. The foot brake must be able to stop the vehicle within 30 feet when the vehicle is going 20 miles per hour. The parking brake must be able to hold the vehicle on a hill.
- Windshield and windows must not be cracked, clouded, shattered or blocked. Aftermarket tinting of windshield and windows to the left and right of the driver is not permitted. Aftermarket tinting of windows to the rear of the driver shall not be less than 35%.
- Steering and front end parts must be in good working condition and not worn.
- Exhaust system parts must be free of holes and leaks and must not make excessive noise.
- Tires must have at least 2/32 of an inch tread and be free of cuts, tears and other dangerous conditions.
- Registration plates must be attached to the vehicle and not be obscured.
- Body and chassis parts must be present and free of rust, sharp edges and other defects.
- Speedometer/odometer must work properly and not be tampered with or changed.
- Bumper height must not be altered.
- Fuel inlet must not be changed in any way.
- Catalytic converter must be properly installed and not changed in any way.
- On Board Diagnostics (OBD) emission testing is done on 1996 and newer cars and light duty trucks (weighing 8,500 lbs. Gross Vehicle Weight Rating or less).

## **Checking the vehicle**

Quickly check your vehicle each day before you begin to drive to see that it is in safe operating condition. You should walk around your vehicle and check these items:

- Windshield and windows - look for cracks.
- Windshield wipers - make sure they are in good condition.
- Leaks - look for a pool of water or oil under the vehicle.
- Tires - check for wear and proper inflation.
- Mirrors - be sure they are clean and adjusted properly.
- Gauges - check to see if they are working.

Each month or before a long trip you should also check for these things:

- Battery - check connections.
- Fanbelts - check for tightness and wear.
- Oil level.
- Engine coolant level.
- Brake fluid level.
- Windshield washer fluid level.
- Lights - make sure they work properly.
- Exhaust system - look under the vehicle for exhaust leaks while engine is running.

## **Additional equipment**

This equipment is very important and is recommended for every vehicle:

- Spare tire - (properly inflated).
- Bumper jack.
- Lug wrench - (device used to remove the wheel fasteners / lug nuts).
- First Aid kit.
- Blanket.
- Flares.

- Flashlight.
- Road maps.
- Pen or pencil, and paper.

In the winter months, the following equipment is recommended:

- Shovel.
- Sand.
- Red flag - (for antenna).
- Tire chains.

### **Motorcycles and motor-driven cycles**

All motorcycles and motor-driven cycles must be inspected by an Official Motorcycle Inspection Station within ten (10) days of registration, and annually by July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Specific requirements for motorcycle inspections are available at any Official Motorcycle Inspection Station or at the Division of Motor Vehicles.

### **Trailers**

All registered trailers with a gross vehicle weight of 3,001 pounds or more must be inspected annually at an Official Inspection Station during the month of registration renewal, or within ten (10) days for a new registration.

The specific requirements of these inspections vary with the weight, size and use of the trailer and are available for review at an Official Inspection Station or at the Division of Motor Vehicles.

All trailers, including those below the weight limit, must be equipped with wheels properly mounted, lubricated and covered with fenders or mud guards. Additionally they must have tires properly inflated and tail, stop, turn signal, license plate and side marker lamps and reflectors.

## **SAFETY EQUIPMENT**

Safety belts are very simple devices which can prevent injury or death if you are in a crash. If you wear a seat belt, your chances of survival after a crash are about twice as good as a person not wearing a seat belt. Your chances are 3 to 4 times better if you are wearing both a seat belt and a shoulder strap. Even if your vehicle is equipped with air bags, you should wear your safety belts.



In a recent year, 142 persons died in crashes inside vehicles in New Hampshire. Only 34 of these people were wearing safety belts. Experts who studied these fatal accidents have reported that 55 of the victims would have survived if they had been wearing safety belts.

Safety belts are important for many reasons:

- They keep you from being thrown from the vehicle. Your chances of survival after a crash are increased up to 5 times if you stay inside the protection of the vehicle.
- They slow your body down with the vehicle. If you are not wearing a seat belt and shoulder strap and have a crash, the vehicle stops but you keep going until you hit the dashboard or windshield. At 30 MPH, this is like falling to the ground from the top of a three-story building.

Seat belts and shoulder straps also help the driver control the vehicle. Here's how:

- They keep you from moving around on the seat at sudden stops and turns. They keep you behind the wheel no matter what happens. You cannot control your vehicle if you slide from behind the wheel.
- If you were struck from the side, the force could push you across the seat. Belts and straps keep you behind the wheel so you can control the vehicle.
- They help you to stay alert by keeping you in a proper driving posture.
- They help you to keep from getting tired by cutting down on the effort needed to keep your body in the seat as the vehicle bounces and turns.

Use safety belts properly. Keep the lap belt fairly tight but comfortable across your lap and hips. Make sure it is below your stomach and rests on your hip bones. Adjust the shoulder harness just loose enough to let your fist go between the belt and your chest. The shoulder harness should be worn only with the lap belt. Children should be at least 40 inches tall to wear a shoulder harness.

All new vehicles have head restraints. Many of these are adjustable. They should always be adjusted to the position recommended in the owner's manual. Properly adjusted head rests help prevent neck injuries in a crash.

Loose, heavy objects fly through the vehicle during a crash and can cause serious injury. Do not place heavy or sharp objects on the dashboard or rear window shelf of your vehicle.

**It is the law for anyone under 18 years of age to be properly restrained by a safety belt.**

## **CHILD PASSENGER RESTRAINTS REQUIRED**

The use of safety belts is very important to children who may actually fly about the interior of the vehicle in a crash. Children should always be restrained by safety equipment while riding in a vehicle.

You should never let children stand on the car seat. Small children and babies must be placed in special child safety seats which attach to the safety belts of a vehicle.

New Hampshire law requires that all children under 18 years of age must wear a seat belt or be secured in a child seat, properly adjusted and fastened, while a passenger in a motor vehicle on any highway in the State.

A child less than 6 years of age and less than 55 inches in height shall be properly fastened and secured in a child passenger restraint which is in accordance with safety standards approved by the United States Department of Transportation.

The driver of the motor vehicle is responsible to assure that all children are properly restrained, except in the following:

- In a vehicle regularly used to transport passengers for hire.
- In a school bus with a gross vehicle weight in excess of 10,000 pounds.
- In an antique vehicle or on a motorcycle.
- If the child under 18 years of age has an individual education plan statement indicating that the use of restraints is not safe.

## **MOTORCYCLE HELMET USE**

The New Hampshire Division of Motor Vehicles is strongly in favor of the use of motorcycle safety helmets. Wearing a securely fastened helmet is the single most important thing you can do to improve your chances of surviving a motorcycle accident. Statistics show that wearing a helmet greatly reduces the risk of injury or death.

New Hampshire law requires all riders and passengers under the age of 18 to wear helmets approved by the U. S. Department of Transportation.

## **NEW MOTOR VEHICLE ARBITRATION BOARD**

The New Hampshire New Motor Vehicle Arbitration Law, RSA 357-D applies to consumers who have serious defects in their new vehicles during the express warranty period provided by the manufacturer.

The law defines a “defect” as a condition that substantially impairs the use, value or safety of a motor vehicle and that the “defect” was not the result of an accident, abuse, neglect, modification or alteration.

If your vehicle meets the following requirements, you may be eligible to use this Board and to ask for a replacement vehicle or partial refund.

### **Requirements:**

1. The new motor vehicle is a passenger vehicle, motorcycle or truck with a Gross Vehicle Weight of 11,000 pounds or less including any OHRV as defined in RSA 215-A:VI.
2. The vehicle was purchased or leased (for two or more years) in New Hampshire.
3. The vehicle has been:
  - a. subject to three (3) unsuccessful repair attempts for the same defect by the manufacturer, its agent or authorized dealer (all 3 repair attempts having occurred under the manufacturer’s warranty); OR
  - b. out-of-service (in the repair shop) for a cumulative total of 30 or more business days for one or more warranty defects within the warranty period.
4. You have written repair orders to prove the repair attempts or number of business days out-of-service. The manufacturer, its agents or dealers cannot refuse to give you a written repair order.
5. You have not stopped making required payments on the vehicle loan or lease.
6. You have not chosen to use the manufacturer’s dispute settlement method.
7. You are not a government entity.

Forms for application to use the New Motor Vehicle Arbitration Board should be included with your new vehicle when it is delivered.

For more information contact the New Hampshire New Motor Vehicle Arbitration Board, 23 Hazen Drive, Concord NH 03305, telephone 603-227-4385.

## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. A privately owned motor vehicle must be inspected \_\_\_\_\_ during the owners \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The foot brake must be capable of stopping a vehicle going 20 mph within \_\_\_\_\_ feet.
3. No tire is in safe operating condition where less than \_\_\_\_\_ of tread design remains on the tire.
4. Your safety belt will keep you from \_\_\_\_\_, thereby helping you to maintain control of the vehicle.
5. New Hampshire law requires youngsters to wear a safety belt or be restrained in a safety seat until \_\_\_\_\_ years of age.
6. New Hampshire law requires operators and or passengers on a motorcycle to wear an approved protective helmet until \_\_\_\_\_ years of age.

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# PART FIVE

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## *Rules of the Road*

The rules of the road are the traffic laws and driving rules set up for safe, smooth travel by all users of the highways. As a driver, you must know what rules apply to you and others. These rules include the signs, signals and markings that are found on the highway. They tell you where you are and what you and others can or cannot do. **A police officer directing traffic overrules any traffic light or sign and must be obeyed.**

### **SIGNS**

The shapes and colors of highway signs have special meanings. This helps you pick out signs quickly.

#### **Standard colors**

- Red - Stop or do not do something.
- Green - Direction or guidance.
- Blue - Driver services.
- Yellow - General warning.
- White - A law or rule.
- Orange - Road repair work warning.
- Brown - Tourist and recreation guidance.

#### **Standard shapes**

- Octagon (8 sides) - Stop.
- Down pointed triangle - Yield. Slow down and give vehicles crossing your path the right of way.
- Pennant (sidewise triangle) - No passing. This sign, found on the left side of the road, gives you warning of no passing zones ahead.
- Diamond - Warning. Special hazards are ahead. Pictures or words will tell you what the hazard is.
- Rectangle (box shaped) - Regulations or guidance. Traffic regulations or directions to drivers.
- Pentagon (shaped like a school house) - School zone and school crossing.

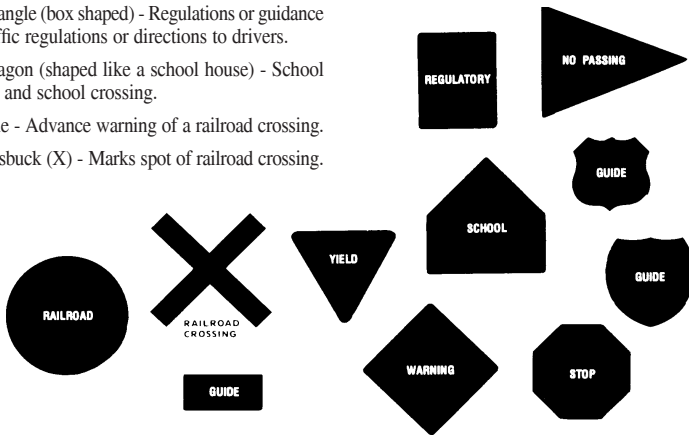
- Circle - Advance warning of a railroad crossing.
- Crossbuck (X) - Marks spot of railroad crossing.

Rectangle (box shaped) - Regulations or guidance  
- traffic regulations or directions to drivers.

Pentagon (shaped like a school house) - School zone and school crossing.

Circle - Advance warning of a railroad crossing.

Crossbuck (X) - Marks spot of railroad crossing.



## Stop signs

You must come to a full stop (wheels must completely stop moving) at an intersection and proceed carefully after giving the right-of-way to any vehicle which has entered the intersection from another road, or which is so close as to be a danger.

## Yield signs

You must slow down as you come up to the intersection and be ready to stop, if necessary, to yield the right-of-way to other vehicles and pedestrians. It means the same as a stop sign except you may go through without coming to a full stop if it is safe to do so.

## Regulatory signs

You must obey the rules on these signs.

## Warning signs

Special hazards are ahead, you should slow down.

## Route signs

Almost all major roads are numbered with route signs. Different shapes and colors are used to mark U.S. Routes, Interstate routes and state roads.

To make traveling easier, interstate routes are numbered by code. Even numbers are east - west routes, odd numbers are north - south routes. Three numbered routes with an odd first number are routes into a city. Three numbered routes with an even first number go through or around a city.

## **TRAFFIC LIGHTS**

Traffic lights control vehicles at major intersections.

### **Red**

Stop before the stop line or crosswalk. Remain stopped until the light turns green and the intersection is clear. **EXCEPTION:** You may make a right turn on a red signal only if: there is no sign prohibiting a right turn on red and (if the intersection is equipped) a steady DON'T WALK signal is being displayed. Then, you may make a right turn after yielding to pedestrians and other traffic in, or approaching, the intersection.

**NOTE:** It is a violation of the law to make a right turn on red when a steady or flashing walk signal is being displayed even if there are no pedestrians in the crosswalk.

### **Yellow**

Caution. The lights are about to change to red. The purpose of the yellow light is to allow vehicles already in the intersection to clear the intersection safely. Do not try to “beat the light” if you have not already entered the intersection.

### **Green**

Go when safe to do so. You must yield to pedestrians and vehicles in the intersection.

### **Red arrow**

You cannot turn left on a red arrow. You can turn right on a red arrow after stopping if you follow the EXCEPTION rule under RED LIGHTS.

### **Green arrow**

You may turn in the direction of the arrow after yielding to traffic and pedestrians.

### **Flashing red**

You must come to a full stop and not go until it is safe to do so. This means the same as a stop sign.

### **Flashing yellow**

Go with caution.

## **PAVEMENT MARKINGS**

Highways are marked with white and/or yellow lines to help drivers. Each type of line has a special meaning.

### **Single, broken (dotted) lines**

Marks traffic lanes. White lines mean these lanes of traffic are moving in the same direction. Yellow lines mean the lanes of traffic are moving in opposite directions. You may pass over any broken (dotted) lines when it is safe to do so.

### **Single solid white lines**

You must not change lanes or pass.

### **Double white or yellow lines**

You must not pass if the line on your side is solid. If the line on your side is broken (dotted), you may pass when safe to do so.

### **Edge markings**

The single line that marks the edge of the road. The line is white on two-way roads and on the right edges of one-way roads. The line is yellow on the left edges of one-way roads.

### **Arrows**

White arrows are painted on some highway lanes to help guide drivers into the proper lanes for turns and through traffic.

### **Stop lines**

White stop lines are painted across pavement lanes at intersections to show drivers where to stop at traffic signals or signs. At intersections where there are no stop lines, vehicles must stop before the crosswalk.

### **Crosswalks**

Crosswalk lines are painted across a road to show pedestrian crossing areas. Drivers are required to yield to pedestrians crossing the road in marked crosswalks or at intersections even if no crosswalk lines exist at the intersection.

## **RIGHT-OF-WAY**

Right-of-way rules help the smooth movement of traffic at an intersection. The law does not really give anyone the “right-of-way”. It only says who must yield it. Drivers must do everything possible to avoid a crash even if they have the right of way. Generally, at an intersection with no traffic sign or signal, the vehicle on your right should go first, but there are several exceptions to this rule. They are:

- A vehicle already in the intersection has the right-of-way over a vehicle preparing to enter.



- A vehicle going straight ahead has the right-of-way over a vehicle turning left.
- The right-of-way must be given to emergency vehicles approaching from any direction when they are sounding a siren or operating their flashing lights (police, fire, ambulance). You must immediately drive to the right side of the road clear of any intersection and stop your vehicle until the emergency vehicle has passed.
- Pedestrians in crosswalks and at intersections have the right-of-way over all vehicles.
- Vehicles about to enter or cross a road from a driveway or private road must yield the right-of-way to all traffic on the main road.
- Yield the right-of-way to blind persons. They are usually led by a guide dog or carrying a white cane (with a red bottom tip) which is used to guide them while walking.
- At a 4-way stop, all others must yield to the vehicle which arrives and stops at the intersection first.
- Yield to funeral processions, and let the cars with headlights on pass as a group.

## **RAILROAD CROSSING**

- Always look both ways as you come up to a railroad crossing.
- Be sure to look, even if the warning lights are not flashing.
- At railroad crossings with stop signs or lights or other stop devices, a driver must stop not less than 15 feet, nor more than 50 feet from the nearest rail of the track. Drivers should not proceed across the tracks until the lights stop flashing or trains have passed.
- If you are stopped at a railroad crossing where there is more than one track, do not start across the tracks as soon as the train passes. Wait until you have a clear view well down the track in both directions before you start across. Another train could be coming from another direction.
- Do not shift gears while crossing railroad tracks, as you might stall your vehicle on the tracks.
- The law requires buses that carry passengers and trucks carrying flammable or dangerous material to stop before crossing railroad tracks even if there is no sign of a train coming. Be ready to stop when driving behind these vehicles.
- Certain railroad crossings are designated as “exempt” and are plainly marked as exempt crossings at these locations.

## SCHOOL BUS

A school bus is a vehicle that can be identified by large “School Bus” signs on the front and back of the vehicle, or a yellow bus marked with the words “School Bus” in black letters.

Whenever you approach a school bus **from any direction**, which has stopped to pick up or let off passengers while operating its flashing red lights, you must stop your vehicle at least 25 feet from the school bus. The only time you do not have to stop is when you are on the other side of a divided highway.

You must stay stopped until the bus has started again or the bus driver stops operating the flashing red lights.

You may meet a school bus traveling with flashing yellow lights. This means that the school bus is about to stop and operate its red lights, so you should slow and be ready to stop.

Always use great care when approaching a stopped or slow-moving school bus. The bus is a warning that children are in the area and may suddenly run into the road.

## CARRYING PASSENGERS AND FREIGHT

- Do not let passengers sit on the hood, roof or trunk of a moving vehicle, and be extra cautious if it becomes necessary to let anyone ride in the body or bed of a pickup or stake body truck.
- No passenger type vehicle can carry a load which extends over the sides of the vehicle beyond the line of the fenders on the left side, or extends more than 6 inches beyond the line of the fenders on the right side of the vehicle.
- You must not drive a vehicle when there are more than 3 persons in the front seat so as to obstruct your view to the front or sides or to interfere with your use of the controls.
- No person may ride in any house trailer or utility trailer while it is being moved on any highway.
- Carrying dogs in pickup trucks is allowed. However, the dog must be protected in a manner which will prevent the dog from being thrown or from falling or jumping from the vehicle.

## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Right turns on red lights are permitted after a stop except when \_\_\_\_\_.
2. An eight sided (octagonal) sign always means \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Upon being approached by an emergency vehicle you should \_\_\_\_\_.
4. If two vehicles are about to enter an intersection at the same time the vehicle to the \_\_\_\_\_ must yield.
5. A rectangular sign indicates a \_\_\_\_\_.
6. A brown sign means \_\_\_\_\_.
7. A diamond shaped sign means \_\_\_\_\_.
8. A green arrow on a traffic light means \_\_\_\_\_.
9. A solid yellow line on your side of the roadway parallel to the yellow center line means \_\_\_\_\_.
10. When approaching a school bus with flashing red lights you must stop your vehicle \_\_\_\_\_ feet away.

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## PART SIX

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### *Turning and Signaling*

#### TURNING

Many crashes occur because of improper turning, or turning without due care and attention. To make a safe turn you should:

- Decide well ahead of the spot where you are going to turn. A turn made at the last minute is more likely to cause a crash.
- Before moving into the proper lane you should:
  1. Signal your intent. Be aware of your surroundings at all times.
  2. Check the mirror for traffic behind you. Check your mirrors diligently.
  3. Check the “blind spot” in the direction you want to turn. Check your blind spot when pedestrians or bicyclists may be present.
- Move into the lane from which you will be making the turn when the way is clear. In fast or heavy traffic you must prepare for the turn well in advance by moving into the proper lane.
- If you are already in the proper lane you must signal at least 100 feet before the turn. On the highway you should signal at least 500 feet before the turn.
- Finish the turn in the proper lane.

The safest way to turn is by crossing as few lanes of traffic as you can. Here are two rules to help you:

- Start from the lane closest to where you want to go. If you are turning left, start from the left lane. If you want to turn right, start from the right lane.
- Turn into the lane that is closest to the lane from which you came. On a left turn, turn into the left lane. On a right turn, turn into the right lane.

If you need to move into another lane, move only after you have finished your turn and the traffic is clear.



Once you have started through an intersection, keep going. If you have started to make a turn, follow through. If you have made a mistake, go on to the next intersection and work your way back to where you want to go.

## STEERING WHEEL USE

- Hands should be in the 9-3 or 8-4 positions.
- Knuckles and thumbs stay on the outside of the wheel.
- Hand to hand steering for slight steering.
- Hand over hand for greater steering inputs.

## SIGNALING

Other drivers expect you to keep going straight ahead. Let them know when you are going to do something different. Your signals give them time to react to your moves.

### Signal when you change direction

You should use the turn signals before you:

- Change lanes
- Turn at an intersection
- Enter or leave an expressway
- Pull away from the curb
- Pull over to the side of the road

### HAND SIGNALS

RIGHT TURN

LEFT TURN

SLOW  
OR STOP



If you do not signal, other drivers will not know what you plan to do. They may start to do something that will lead to a crash. Here are some important rules about signaling direction changes:

- Get into the habit of signaling every time you change direction. Signal even when you do not see anyone else around. The vehicle that you do not see is the most dangerous.
- Signal as early as you can. The driver behind you should have 3 or 4 seconds warning before you make your turn. If you are planning to turn at an intersection, start signaling about half a block away.

If you plan to turn beyond an intersection, do not signal until you are actually in the intersection. Signaling earlier may cause other drivers to think you will turn before you reach them and cause them to pull into your path.

After you have made a gradual turn or lane change, make sure the turn signal is off as the signal may not turn off automatically. Always check the signals after turning. Turn them off if they do not do so by themselves. If you do not, other drivers might think you plan to turn.

If the signal lights are not working, you must use hand signals. (see diagram on page 35) These are simple and easy to learn.

### **Signal when you slow your vehicle or stop suddenly**

Your brake lights let people know that you are slowing down, but they do not indicate how much. When you are going to slow down at a place where another driver does not expect it, quickly “tap” your brakes 3 or 4 times.

### **Signal before slowing down:**

- To turn off a highway which has no designated lane to reduce your speed.
- To park or turn into a driveway. This is important when you park or turn just before reaching an intersection. The driver behind you will expect you to continue until you reach the intersection.
- To avoid something in the road ahead of you which the driver behind you cannot see.

## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. You should signal your intention to turn at least \_\_\_\_\_ feet before the turn.
2. The correct hand signal for slow or stop is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. To make a right turn, you should be in the \_\_\_\_\_ lane.
4. When making a turn at an intersection you should turn into the lane that is \_\_\_\_\_ to you.
5. You should signal before you change direction. Signals should be given before:
  - a \_\_\_\_\_
  - b \_\_\_\_\_
  - c \_\_\_\_\_
  - d \_\_\_\_\_
  - e \_\_\_\_\_

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# PART SEVEN

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## *Following, Passing, and Lane Usage*

### **Following Distance**

Use a following distance that will allow you enough space to change your path of travel or stop if needed. It is against the law to follow another vehicle more closely than is reasonable. Rear end crashes, the most common type of crash, may be avoided by maintaining a safe following distance.

Traffic, speed, along with light, weather and road conditions will impact the space needed between vehicle or other potential hazards. In order to reduce your risk of a collision, you should maintain enough following distance space to allow you to stop or change your path of travel to avoid a collision.

How do you know if you are maintaining a “safe” following distance? Use the 3 second rule described below. Adjust your following distance to your circumstance and situation. Start by maintaining a minimum 3 second following distance under ideal road and traffic conditions, at lower speeds, in clear weather and ideal light conditions. Increase your 3 second following distance by an additional second for each negative situation or condition. If you’re traveling at higher speeds add one more second. If your are traveling on slippery roads add another second. If it is dark or visibility is limited add another second. As the number of risk factors increase, increase your seconds of following distance.

To measure your following distance, pick a fixed object like a sign, a telephone pole, bridge or tree ahead of you and the vehicle you are following. As the vehicle in front of you passes that object, begin to count seconds, (one-thousand-one, one- thousand-two, one-thousand-three and so on until your vehicle reaches the sign, pole, bridge or tree). If you pass the object before you have reached the desired distance in seconds, ease up on the accelerator and try again.

As you begin to measure and adjust your following distance, it will become easier and a habit over time. Keeping enough distance between you and others will greatly increase your ability to avoid the most common type of crash, rear end collisions.

### **At a stop**

When stopped behind another vehicle, stay back far enough to see the ground space under the vehicle’s rear wheels. This will allow you to move around the vehicle if needed and to help if the car in front of you is on a hill and rolls back.



## **Tailgaters**

If you are being tailgated you should:

- “Flash” your brake lights (by tapping your brakes lightly). Perhaps the vehicle tailgating will drop back. (To avoid a crash, do not tap your brakes if the tailgater is too close.)
- Reduce your speed and encourage the vehicle that is tailgating to pass.
- If all else fails, pull over, stop and let the vehicle pass.

## **Following fire trucks**

You must not follow a fire truck going to a fire alarm closer than 500 feet. You must not drive or park your vehicle within the block where a fire truck has stopped to answer a fire alarm.

## **PASSING**

Passing other vehicles on a highway requires extra skill, good judgment of speed and distance and extreme care. At night, judging speed and distance is harder and the risks become greater. At 55 MPH you will travel over 800 feet in 10 seconds. So will an oncoming vehicle. That means you need over 1,600 feet or about one third of a mile to pass safely. It is hard to judge the speed of oncoming vehicles at this distance. They do not seem to be coming as fast as they really are. A vehicle that is far away generally appears to be standing still. In fact, if you can actually see that it is coming closer, it may be too close for you to pass. If you are not sure, wait to pass until you are sure that there is enough space.

### **How to pass**

You must know when not to pass and when to pass. The important thing to remember is:

- When there is any doubt - DO NOT PASS.
- Check the passing lane before you decide to pass.
- Check your blind spot, signal and then move to the passing lane.
- Keep up your speed and move to the right lane again only after you can see the passed vehicle’s headlights in your mirror. This way you will have enough space between your vehicle and the one you just passed to return to your lane.
- Be sure to signal before moving your vehicle back into the right lane.
- You must get back in the right lane before coming within 200 feet of any oncoming vehicle.

## **Being passed**

If you are being passed, you should help the driver who is passing you by reducing speed and keeping to the right of the road.

## **Passing on the right**

### **Passing other vehicles on the right is allowed when:**

- The vehicle ahead is making a left turn.
- You are on a one-way street with 2 or more lanes.
- You are on a limited access highway where there are 2 or more lanes in one direction.
- Never drive off the pavement or main traveled portion of the road to pass another vehicle.

### **Passing is not allowed:**

- Unless the left lane of the road is clearly visible and free from on-coming traffic for a distance that will safely allow you to pass.
- When coming up to the crest of a hill.
- On a curve where your view is hidden.
- Within 100 feet of a viaduct, bridge or tunnel.
- Within 100 feet of an intersection or railroad crossing.
- In “no passing zones” marked by signs or road markings.

## **LANE USAGE**

In normal driving conditions, you should drive in the lane that has the smoothest flow of traffic. Smooth driving allows you to keep more distance between yourself and other drivers. It also helps save you money on gas.

If there are 3 or more lanes going in one direction, the middle lane or lanes are usually the smoothest. The left lane is for drivers who want to go faster, pass or turn left. The right lane is used by drivers who go slower or who are entering or turning off the road.

If a road has only two lanes in one direction, the right lane usually has the smoothest traffic flow. However, some roads have special left turn lanes at intersections. This helps keep traffic moving smoothly in both directions.

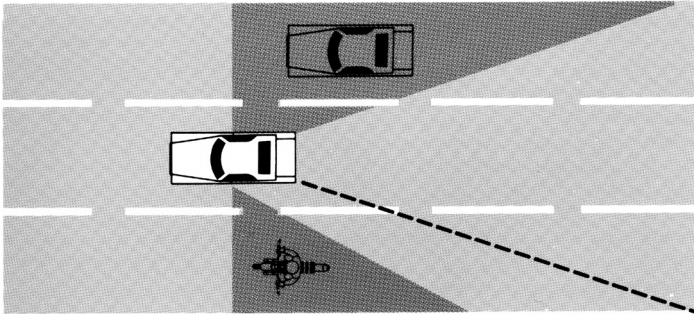
## LANE POSITION

Proper lane positioning not only communicates intent, it also frees up lane space allowing other vehicles to pass when you are turning. Position your vehicle in the center of your lane when driving straight ahead, move your vehicle either to the left or right side of your lane to indicate your intention to turn in that direction. Do not cross median lines or leave the roadway.

### Changing lanes

Whenever you change lanes you must make sure you are not getting in the way of other vehicles. Before changing lanes

- Signal in the direction you intend to turn
- Look into your rearview mirror for traffic approaching from the rear then look into the outside mirror for traffic approaching from that side.
- Turn your head in the direction of the turn checking your **blind spot**.
- Never change lanes in an intersection.



### BLIND SPOT

Before changing lanes turn your head in the direction of the turn. Do not forget to check over your shoulder for vehicles that you cannot see in your mirror (“in your blind spot”). Check QUICKLY. Do not take your eyes off the road for more than an instant, because the vehicle ahead of you could stop suddenly while you are checking over your shoulder.

**A GOOD RULE OF THUMB IS: TURN YOUR HEAD BEFORE YOU TURN THE WHEEL.**

Always keep your eyes moving scanning side to side. Looking ahead and continually checking your mirrors will make you aware of potential hazards.

## Mirror Use

Check your mirrors continually before you slow down, stop, turn or change lanes.

## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Fire apparatus responding to an alarm should not be followed closer than \_\_\_\_\_ feet.
2. A rule that enables drivers to plan stopping distance in terms other than feet is called \_\_\_\_\_ rule.
3. Name one circumstance where you may legally pass another vehicle on the right \_\_\_\_\_.
4. You must not pass another vehicle within \_\_\_\_\_ feet of a bridge or tunnel.
5. You must not pass another vehicle within \_\_\_\_\_ feet of an intersection or railroad crossing.
6. When stopped behind another vehicle on a hill you should stay back far enough to \_\_\_\_\_.
7. When there are 3 or more lanes in one direction the \_\_\_\_\_ lane usually has the smoothest traffic.

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# PART EIGHT

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## *Stopping*

Even when road and vehicle conditions are ideal and the driver is perfectly alert, it takes a great distance to stop a motor vehicle. Through the use of good judgment and knowledge of stopping distances you can reduce the chance of being involved in a crash.

To stop your vehicle, 3 things must occur:

- You must see and recognize the danger or need to stop.
- Your brain must tell your foot to step on the brakes.
- Your foot must move to the brake pedal and operate the brakes.

The time it takes from the moment you see the danger until you step on the brake is called the **REACTION TIME**. The distance your vehicle has traveled during this time is called the **REACTION DISTANCE**. Tests have shown that the average driver takes about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a second to put a foot on the brake pedal after seeing the danger.

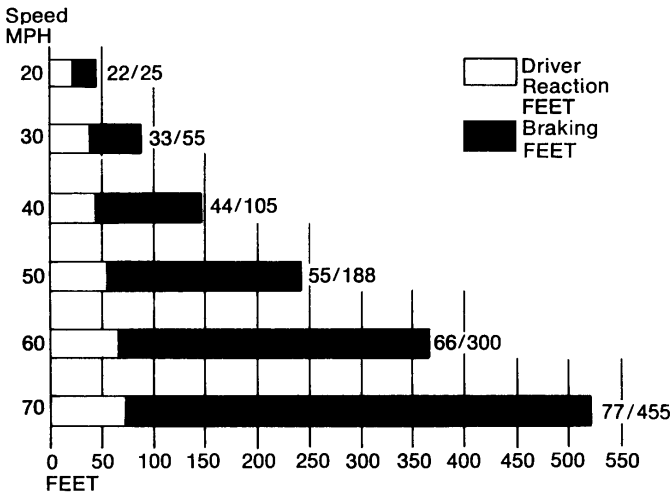
To actually stop your vehicle 2 other things are important - braking time and braking distance.

- **BRAKING TIME** is the time it takes for the brakes and friction between the road and tires to stop the vehicle.
- **BRAKING DISTANCE** is the distance your vehicle travels during this time.

The braking ability of a vehicle varies due to differences in road surfaces, tires, brakes, weather and other factors.

The distance it takes you to stop your vehicle can be calculated by adding the reaction distance and the braking distance.

## AVERAGE STOPPING DISTANCE OF CARS ON DRY LEVEL PAVEMENT



Stopping distances are based on tests made by the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads. Driver reaction time is based on the reaction time of “three-quarter” second.

### TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Reaction time is \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Reaction distance is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Braking time is \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Braking distance is \_\_\_\_\_.

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# PART NINE

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## *Speed*

Speed is a major factor in many motor vehicle crashes. As a result, police officers spend a great deal of time looking for speeders. In New Hampshire, the police use radar, motorcycles and aircraft for this purpose. More drivers are convicted of speeding than any other offense. Drivers who speed endanger the lives of others and their own. You must learn to obey the speed limits and adjust your speed to the conditions under which you are driving.

### **What is a safe speed?**

The “safe” speed is the one that allows you to have complete control of the vehicle and allows you to handle any emergency that might arise.

The safe speed is determined by:

- **Road conditions** - Curves, slippery conditions and bumpy roads call for lower speeds.
- **How well you can see** - Darkness, rain, fog, snow, intersections, hills, curves and parked vehicles keep you from seeing well and call for reduced speed.
- **How much traffic there is** - Heavy traffic conditions mean added dangers.
- **How fast traffic is moving** - Vehicles moving in the same direction at the same speed generally do not crash into each other. Crashes occur when one driver is going faster or slower than other vehicles on the road. The safest speed is the average speed at which other traffic is moving, provided that the average speed is not greater than the posted speed limit.
- **The condition of your vehicle.**
- **Your physical and mental condition.**

### **Speed limits**

Speed limits are set by the Highway Department. This is done only after traffic engineers and other officials have studied crashes, traffic flow, average speed of vehicles and other related information.

Speed limits are the maximum speed you may travel UNDER IDEAL CONDITIONS. If road, visibility or traffic conditions are less than ideal, you must slow down to a speed less than the speed limit.

The maximum speed limits in New Hampshire are:

- In a posted school zone the speed limit is 10 miles per hour below the usual posted speed limit, from 45 minutes before school opening until the school opening, and from the school closing until 45 minutes after the school closing.
- 30 MPH - In any business or urban residence district.
- 35 MPH - In any rural residence district.
- 45 MPH - When towing a house trailer.
- 55 MPH - All other areas, including interstate highways not otherwise posted.
- 65 MPH - Specific sections of interstate highway system where posted.
- Fines for speeding in a work zone are: Not less than \$250.00 not more than \$500.00

### **High speed driving**

If you are going faster than other vehicles, you will have to keep passing other vehicles. Each time you pass another vehicle, you have more chance for a crash. The vehicle you are passing may change lanes suddenly. On a two-way road an oncoming vehicle may appear suddenly. True, it may not be a big chance, but if you are passing one vehicle after another, the chances begin to add up. Studies show speeding does not save more than a few minutes out of one hour of driving.

Think about these facts:

- When you double your speed, the stopping distance is nearly 4 times greater.
- Risk of serious injury or death is 4 times as great at 60 MPH than at 30 MPH.
- You waste fuel and increase the wear and tear on your vehicle at high speeds.



## **The slow driver**

Speeding is dangerous, but so is driving too slowly. Drivers who go far slower than the normal flow of traffic cause a great hazard. They often block those behind them, making other drivers jump from lane to lane, or taking chances on passing when there may not be enough room ahead.

It is against the law to drive at such a slow speed that you hold up the normal traffic flow. If for some reason you must travel at a slow speed, you should use common sense and courtesy by:

- Moving to the right lane, thereby allowing other traffic to pass.
- Pulling off the road and stopping to allow traffic to pass.

The minimum speed you may drive on an interstate highway is 45 MPH, unless road and weather conditions are so bad that this speed is unsafe.

## **TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE**

1. The speed limit when passing a school during school opening is \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The speed limit in a business or urban residence district is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The speed limit in a rural residence district is \_\_\_\_\_.
4. When road, weather and traffic conditions are ideal you may not travel slower than \_\_\_\_\_ mph on any New Hampshire interstate unless otherwise posted.
5. When you double your speed, the stopping distance is nearly \_\_\_\_\_ times greater.

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# PART TEN

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## *Parking and Backing*

Stopping, standing and parking are regulated to keep the highways open for a smooth flow of traffic and to keep stopped vehicles from blocking intersections, driveways, fire hydrants and other areas that must be kept clear. These laws apply in all situations unless otherwise indicated by signs.

Many drivers find it very hard to park in a tight space. Only practice develops this important driving skill. Parking requires good judgment and good control of your vehicle.

When you park on a public road, you must make sure you do not get in the way of traffic.

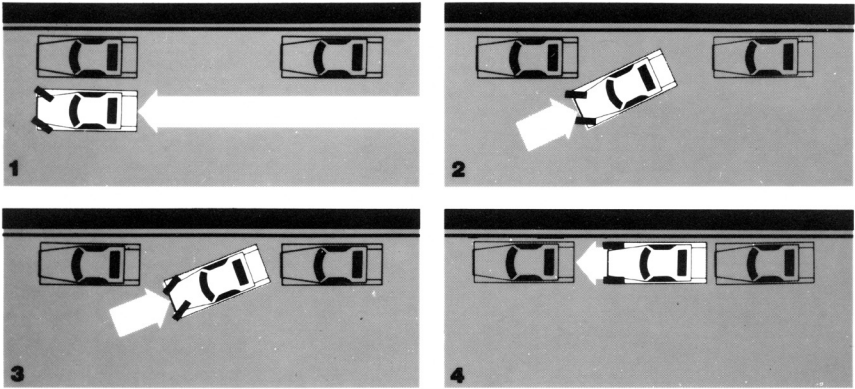
- **Move as far away from traffic as possible.** If there is a roadside shoulder, pull as far onto it as you can. If there is a curb, park as close to it as you can. You cannot be more than one foot away from the curb.
- **Avoid traffic.** Get out of your vehicle on the curb side if you can. If you have to use the street side, check traffic behind you before you open the door.
- **Secure the vehicle.** The law requires you to turn off the engine and remove the key when you leave a vehicle. You should also lock your vehicle whenever you park it.
- **Make sure the vehicle cannot move.** Place your vehicle in reverse or low gear if you have a manual transmission, or in “park” if you have an automatic transmission. You should also firmly set the parking brake. Turn the wheels into the curb if you park on a hill.
- **Check traffic.** When leaving a parking space, always check traffic around you. Signal your intention to pull out, and wait until it is safe to do so.

### **Backing**

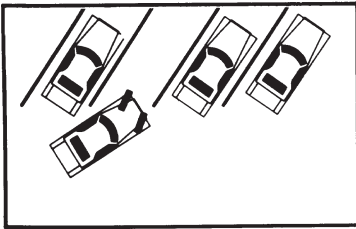
Look in the direction your vehicle is moving. Look over your right shoulder to see left, right and behind your vehicle while backing. Check your side mirrors continually. The mirrors may detect something you could not see while looking over your shoulder.

## Parallel parking

Learn to judge whether the space left along the curb is large enough for parking. A good rule is that you need at least 5 feet more than the length of the car to park easily.

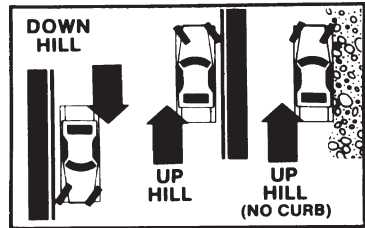


## Angle parking



*This type of parking is common in parking lots, shopping centers and wide streets.*

## Parking on a hill



## Parking pointers

Any vehicle parked along a rural highway must be moved off the paved or main traveled portion of the road or it will be towed by the police. If it is impossible to pull completely off the road, you may park if there is a clear view for a distance of 200 feet in each direction and if there is enough space for other vehicles to pass. Do not stop on the roadway, on a hill, or on an interstate highway or expressway.

You must turn on your parking lights whenever you park between one-half hour after sunset and one-half hour before sunrise and whenever rain, snow or fog interferes with clear vision. However, parking lights are not required if your vehicle is plainly visible because of street or other lights. You should also use the emergency flashers if the vehicle is so equipped.

The police often tow vehicles abandoned along the highway even if the vehicle is well off the traveled portion. If you must leave your vehicle for several hours, you should leave a note on your windshield advising the police of the problem, when you plan to move the vehicle, and how to get in touch with you. You should also call the local police or the state police at their toll-free emergency number at 1-800-525-5555.

### **Illegal parking**

Parking is NOT allowed in the following places:

- Alongside another parked vehicle (no double parking).
- On a sidewalk.
- In an intersection.
- On a crosswalk.
- On any bridge.
- In any highway tunnel.
- In such a way that blocks traffic or is a hazard to others on the road.
- On any street where there is not clearance for other vehicles to pass between the parked vehicles and the far curb.
- In front of a driveway.
- Within 15 feet of a fire hydrant.
- Within 20 feet of a crosswalk at an intersection.
- Within 30 feet of a stop sign, yield sign or traffic control signal.
- Within 20 feet of the driveway entrance to any fire station or within 75 feet on the opposite side of the street.
- Within 50 feet of the nearest rail of a railroad crossing.
- At any place where signs or pavement markings tell you that you cannot park.
- Parking spaces, including access aisles, that are reserved for individuals with walking disabilities. A conviction for parking in such spaces carries with it a fine of AT LEAST \$250.00.

Never open a door into traffic and do not start a parked vehicle until you can do so safely.

## Access Aisles

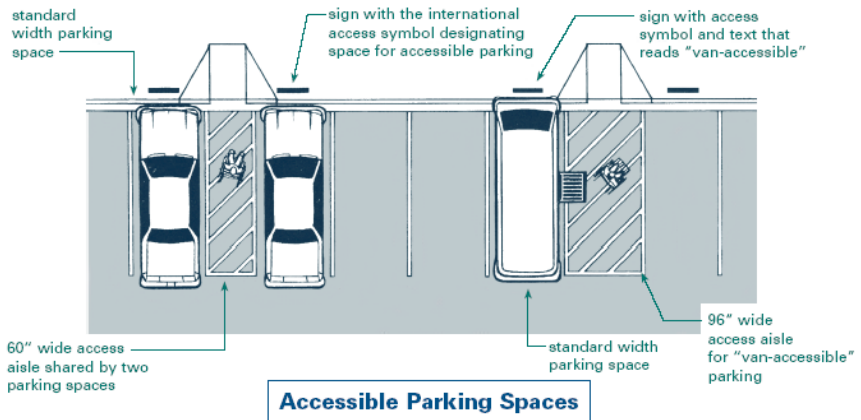
It is against the law to park in access aisles. Anybody who parks in an access aisle will be fined:

- \$50.00 for the first offense
- \$100.00 for the second offense and each subsequent offense

The access aisle is the crosshatched area parallel and adjacent to the accessible parking space.

This area, marked by yellow or white diagonally striped lines, is the space needed by individuals with walking disabilities to be able to fully open the door to their vehicle and safely maneuver in and out of their vehicle.

Exiting or entering a van with a lift or ramp requires the entire access aisle space, which can be up to 8 feet wide to engage the lift/ramp and safely maneuver a wheelchair on or off the lift/ramp.



## What can you do?

- If a member of the disabled community finds themselves in a situation where they cannot exit or enter their vehicle safely, due to a vehicle parked in an access aisle, they should contact the local police department immediately.
- The law permits persons with walking disabilities or their drivers to submit a photo of a vehicle that is parked illegally, in an accessible parking space or an access aisle. The photo must be accompanied with a sworn statement to the local police department.

## Be Courteous

- Countless times individuals with walking disabilities have returned to their vehicles only to find that someone has parked illegally in the access aisle. Be aware this leaves very little space between vehicles, resulting in their being unable to get back into their vehicle.

*Please note that it is against the law to leave a walking disability placard on your rear view mirror while you are driving, it is only to be used when the vehicle is parked.*

## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. The driver of a vehicle must remove \_\_\_\_\_ from an unattended vehicle.
2. Parking is not allowed within \_\_\_\_\_ feet of a fire hydrant.
3. You should not park a vehicle on the roadway but if you do it must be visible for \_\_\_\_\_ feet.
4. If you are parking on the right side of the roadway, uphill with a curb you should turn the wheels of the vehicle to the \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Do not park within \_\_\_\_\_ feet of a crosswalk or an intersection.
6. Parking is not allowed within \_\_\_\_\_ feet of a stop sign.

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# PART ELEVEN

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## *Hazardous Driving Conditions*

### WEATHER CONDITIONS

#### Ice, sleet or snow

Winter driving has its own special hazards calling for extra driving skills. On slippery roads the keys to safe driving are slower speeds, gentler stops and turns, and increased following distances.

Here are some safe driving practices to help you when driving in the winter:

- Get the “feel” of the road by starting at a slow speed and testing the steering control and the braking ability with the surface of the road.
- Never spin the tires when starting. Gently press the gas pedal until the vehicle starts to roll. Start slowing down at least 3 times the distance you normally do when turning or stopping.
- Lower your speed to suit the conditions. Use tire chains on very slippery roads. Remember that snow tires or chains still do not allow you to drive at normal speeds on slippery roads.
- When stopping, “pump” the brakes gently and avoid sudden movements of the steering wheel.
- Keep the vehicle in the best possible driving condition. The lights, tires, brakes, windshield wipers, defrosters and radiator are especially important for winter driving.
- Keep the windows clear. *Do not start driving until the windows are defrosted and clean!* Remove snow and ice from the vehicle even if you are going just a short distance.
- Watch for danger spots ahead. Ice may be on bridges even if the rest of the pavement is clear. Also, snow and ice melt more slowly in shaded areas.
- Make sure there is fresh air inside your vehicle. Keep your exhaust system free from leaks. Carbon monoxide poisoning is much more likely to occur during the winter time when you drive with all the windows closed. You cannot smell these fumes and they are deadly. Signs of carbon monoxide poisoning are: **a)** being tired; **b)** yawning; **c)** dizziness; **d)** becoming suddenly sick to your stomach. The only way to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning is to stop the engine and get plenty of fresh air

- Make sure to clear **all** of the snow from your vehicle before heading out on the road. You, as a driver are responsible for your vehicle at all times and must ensure that it is safe for other travelers as well.

### **If you become stuck in a heavy snowstorm or blizzard**

- Stay with the vehicle. Most deaths occur when people leave the vehicle, get lost and freeze to death.
- Put a red flag on the radio antenna or driver's door handle and place flares to the front and rear of the vehicle.
- Wrap yourself and any passengers in blankets and put on any warm clothing that is handy.
- Run the engine and heater until the car is warm then shut it off. Repeat this when you start to feel cold.
- Provide a little fresh air to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning, even if it is very cold.
- Keep yourself and your passengers as active as possible. **DO NOT LET ANYONE GO TO SLEEP.**
- Do not panic. Be confident that help will arrive soon.

### **Fog**

The best rule during foggy conditions is to avoid driving. If you must drive you should:

- Lower your normal driving speed greatly.
- Turn the headlights on. Put them on low beam to prevent the glaring reflection of your lights on the fog.
- Look for road edge markings to guide you.
- Lower your speed still when you see headlights or taillights. The headlights may be on a vehicle that is being driven down the center of the road, and the taillights may be a vehicle stopped or just barely moving.
- Be ready for a quick stop, and keep within the limits of your vision. If the fog becomes so thick that you can barely see, pull off the road and stop. Use the emergency flashers. Wait until visibility improves. Do not creep along at 5 or 10 miles per hour.

### **Rain**

Wet roads can be as dangerous as icy roads, so always lower your speed in wet weather. You will need more distance for stopping and you may skid on quick turns.



Roads are more dangerous at the start of a light rain when road oil and water mix to form a greasy film on the road. Remember that wet leaves on the pavement are as dangerous and as slippery as ice.

Rain also creates vision problems. Be sure to keep the windshield wipers and defroster in good condition. Make sure the vehicle is visible by turning on the headlights.

Signal all turns and begin braking well ahead so that other drivers will know what you are going to do.

**“Hydroplaning,”** which can cause skidding, takes place when you are driving on wet roads. At speeds up to 35 MPH, most tires will “wipe” the road surface the same way a windshield wiper cleans the windshield. However, as the speed increases, the tires cannot “wipe” the road as well and start to ride up on a film of water just like a set of water skis.

In most vehicles, hydroplaning begins at about 35 MPH and increases with speed to about 55 MPH, at which point the tires may be totally running on the water. In a bad rainstorm, the tires may lose all contact with the road at 55 MPH. If this is the case, there is no friction when braking, accelerating or cornering. A gust of wind, a curve or a slight turn can cause a skid.

**To reduce the chances of hydroplaning you should:**

- Reduce your speed during rainstorms or when roads are slushy.
- Reduce your speed if the road has standing water or puddles.
- Replace tires when they become worn (tread depth less than  $\frac{2}{32}$  of an inch).
- Keep tires properly inflated.

**If you see that you are about to drive over a slippery area or if you think the vehicle has started to hydroplane:**

- Keep a steady speed and keep moving in a straight line.
- Slowly take your foot off the gas pedal.
- If you have to use the brakes - pump them gently.
- Do not try to stop or turn quickly until the tires are gripping the road again.

**NIGHT DRIVING**

The fatal crash rate for night driving is nearly 3 times greater than for daytime driving, even though there are fewer miles driven at night. There are several factors that lead to this, such as night vision, glare or fatigue.

## **Night vision**

At night, your seeing distance is greatly shortened and you cannot see things as soon or as well as you do during the day. Objects on or near the road do not look the same as in the daylight. They often blend with the dark.

Too many drivers try to drive the same speed at night as they would in the daytime. You should reduce your speed at night. Never drive so fast that you cannot stop within the distance you can see with your lights. This is called over-driving your headlights. Under normal conditions headlights on high beam illuminate about 350 feet while headlights on low beam illuminate about 100 feet.

The law states that you must turn on your headlights from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise. Turn on your headlights at any time your vision is limited, or when you cannot clearly make out objects at a distance of 1000 feet ahead.

## **Glare**

At night, glaring lights of oncoming vehicles or lights behind you reflecting into your mirror can reduce your vision and may even cause temporary blindness. The glare causes the pupil of your eye to get smaller and it takes a while for your eyes to adjust to the strong light. The time it takes for your eyes to adjust varies from person to person, but usually takes longer for older drivers and those in poor physical condition.

To reduce the glare, shift your eyes to the lower right edge of the road and concentrate on the white edge markings. To cut glare from the rear, adjust your mirror or use a day-night mirror.

Always lower your speed until your eyes have recovered from the glare.

## **Fatigue**

Being tired or drowsy is the enemy of all night drivers. You must be aware of the first signs of drowsiness or sleepiness. Being drowsy or half asleep is often called “**highway hypnosis**” and is like being drugged.

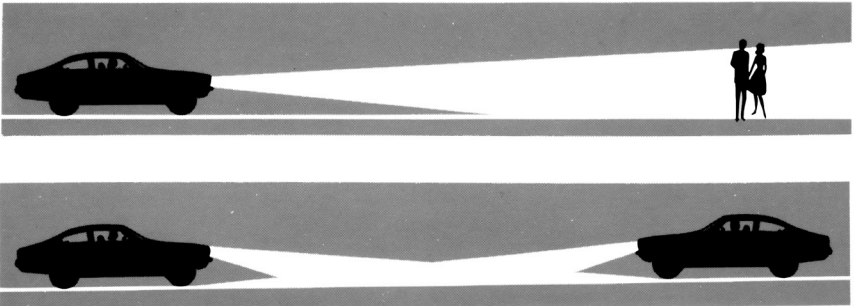
It usually happens when you have been driving for a long time, or if you were tired when you started. Always try to be well rested before you start a trip. To reduce fatigue you should:

- Stop as often as you need, at least every 2 hours.
- Have a cup of coffee or soft drink.
- Get out of the vehicle and walk around to stretch and get some fresh air.
- Let someone else drive.

- Get passengers to talk with you.
- Chew gum or eat fruit or candy.
- Listen to the radio.
- Sing aloud to yourself.
- Move your eyes around. Look toward the distance, then look at close objects. Look from side to side.
- Open windows enough to let in fresh air and keep the vehicle cool.
- At times change the speed of the vehicle and change your body's position.
- Turn on the wipers now and then to break the monotony.
- If none of this helps, get the needed rest at a motel or park well off the road. If you must park by the side of the road, pull over as far as possible, turn off the engine, lock the doors, open the windows slightly for ventilation and sleep for a while.

### Night driving tips

- Make sure the headlights are working well and are kept clean. When the vehicle is inspected, the headlights are checked for proper aim. However, if you drive a lot on rough roads, have them checked more often.



- Dim the lights well before meeting an oncoming vehicle. The law states that you must dim your lights when within 150 feet of an oncoming vehicle, and within 150 feet when **FOLLOWING** another vehicle. Do not wait for the other drivers to dim their lights first. Resist the temptation to “pay them back.” A driver blinded by your high beam headlights may crash into you.
- Reduce your speed when meeting another vehicle or when nearing a curve if you are driving at or near the speed limit.

- Never wear dark or tinted glasses or tinted contact lenses at night.
- Keep your dash lights low and turn off other inside lights. These lights reduce your vision and cause glare.
- Watch for pedestrians and vehicles stopped at the edge of the road.
- Watch carefully for highway signs, they are harder to see at night.
- Do not stop in the road for any reason. If you must stop, pull off onto the shoulder and use your emergency flashers.

## **CURVES**

Curves call for special attention, therefore, it is a good idea to reduce your speed before entering any curve. Braking should be done before, **NOT WHEN IN THE CURVE**. Braking in a curve can cause a skid. Once you are in a curve at a proper speed you can speed up gradually through the rest of the curve.

At every curve assume that there may be something in your path. Be ready for a stopped vehicle or an oncoming vehicle on your side of the road.

Curves are dangerous at all times, especially when they are wet or slippery. Centrifugal force (the force that pushes you away from the center of the road) can cause the vehicle to go off the road on a curve. When entering a left-hand curve you should steer toward, but not over, the center of the road. On a right-hand curve steer toward the right side of the road.

## **HILLS**

Lower your speed as you near the top of a hill. As you start down, the distance you can see increases, but so does your stopping distance. If the downgrade is very steep, shift to a lower gear when starting down. You will save wear on the brakes because the engine will act as a braking force.

Never coast down hills with the transmission in neutral or the clutch disengaged. It's not only against the law, but it could harm the engine, clutch and transmission.

## **DRIVER DISTRACTIONS**

Safely operating a motor vehicle is a full time job. Be aware of the many ways you may be distracted from your driving responsibilities. Some common distractions include: use of cell phones, adjusting your radio, talking to passengers, and having pets in the vehicle. You may be cited for "Negligent Driving" if you are operating a motor vehicle in a manner that endangers, or is likely to endanger, any person or property.

## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. The lights of your vehicle must be turned on between the hours of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
2. You must put your headlight on low beam when approaching or overtaking another vehicle within \_\_\_\_\_ feet.
3. Drive with the headlights on \_\_\_\_\_ beam to reduce the glaring reflection bouncing back when driving in fog.
4. Hydroplaning is when \_\_\_\_\_.
5. You must clear your vehicle of snow and ice prior to driving on any \_\_\_\_\_ within New Hampshire.

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# PART TWELVE

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## *Driving Emergencies*

Emergencies can vary from windshield wiper failure to being involved in a major crash. You will overcome or minimize emergencies by knowing what to do. This section will give you suggestions on how to prevent emergencies from happening or how to deal with them if they happen. Knowing what to do can save your life.

There is one basic rule for all driving emergencies - **think before you act**. A panic reaction could result in a disaster. Your very survival may depend on two things - your ability to stay calm and your knowledge of the best action to take.

Vehicles equipped with ABS (Anti-Lock Braking Systems) improve braking capabilities, especially in emergencies. If your vehicle has ABS as standard equipment, follow the manufacturer's recommendations as shown in your owner's manual. Fix in your mind now what you should do if any of the following emergencies happen to you.

### **Running off the pavement**

Serious crashes can result if you run off the pavement. If this happens, do not try to turn sharply back onto the road and risk rolling over or going into a dangerous skid. Instead:

- Do not panic! Grip the steering wheel tightly.
- Ease up on the gas pedal.
- Do not step on the brake pedal suddenly and hard. Step on the brake pedal gently.

After you have slowed, you can steer back onto the road. Before doing so, check the road for traffic ahead and behind, then turn the wheels to get back onto the road.

### **Blowouts**

A tire blowout can cause sudden loss of control of the vehicle. Blowouts occur more often than most drivers suspect and the behavior of the vehicle depends on which tire fails. In a front tire blowout, the vehicle will swerve to the side of the blowout. In a rear tire blowout, the vehicle will sway from side to side (fishtail).

If you have a sudden tire blowout, you will hear a loud “thump, thump, thump.” You should:

- Hold the steering wheel tightly and keep the vehicle going straight.
- Take your foot off the gas pedal and allow the vehicle to slow gradually.
- Brake gently **ONLY** when your speed is slow enough to keep control of the vehicle.
- Use the turn signals and pull well off the road.

Not having enough air in the tire is a common cause of blowouts. Check the pressure in the tires regularly. Check the pressure when the tires are cool. When traveling long distances at high speeds or with heavy loads, increase the air pressure in each tire by 4 pounds. Also, check the tires for cuts and bulges. When driving, a bulge in a tire will cause a “thumping” sound or the car may pull sideways because the tire is quickly losing air.

### **How to change a tire**

A tire change places you and the vehicle in danger. Here is how to do it quickly and get moving again.

1. Set the parking brake **TIGHT**. Block the wheel diagonally opposite the flat. Take out the jack, the lug wrench and the spare tire.
2. Pry off the wheel cover with the chisel end of the lug wrench. Loosen each lug nut (but do not remove).
3. Place the jack on firm ground making sure it is perfectly straight up and down. See the owner’s manual or the instruction sheet (sometimes found on the under side of the trunk lid) for directions on using the jack. Pump the jack until the wheel is off the ground 2-3 inches.
4. Remove the lug nuts, place them in the wheel cover for safe keeping.
5. Lift the wheel off, replace it with the spare wheel and screw the lug nuts on until snug.
6. Lower the vehicle until the tire just touches the ground, tighten the nuts and then finish jacking the vehicle down. Replace the wheel cover (hubcap).

### **WARNING:**

**Prior to changing a tire follow the manufacturer’s recommendations as shown in your owner’s manual.**

## Loss of a wheel

This is very similar to a blowout. The warning signals are often the same. To regain control, use the same methods you would use for a blowout.

## Skidding

Skidding happens when the tires no longer grip the road. When the tires lose their grip, the vehicle starts to slide. Skidding can happen on dry roads as easily as on wet roads.

In reality more people are hurt or killed on dry road skids than on wet road skids. Causes of skids are sand, gravel, bumps, mud, oil slicks, wet leaves or water in the road.

When skidding, the engine loses the ability to pull the vehicle and the brakes lose their ability to stop the vehicle.

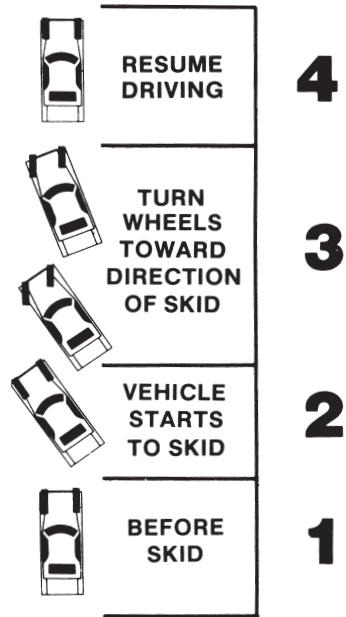
To recover from a skid with a rear wheel drive vehicle you should:

- Stay off the brake pedal. If you apply the brakes, the wheels will lock and will make the skid worse.
- Steer in the direction that the rear of the vehicle is sliding. This will allow the vehicle to go straight instead of sideways.
- Be ready to steer in the opposite direction if your vehicle starts swerving in the other direction.
- Straighten the front wheels once you get out of the skid.

To recover from a skid with a front wheel drive vehicle you should:

- Gently steer in your correct direction of travel.
- Slowly apply power to your vehicle.
- Do not brake.

To avoid skids, reduce your speed as you near danger spots and do not increase your speed, do not brake or change direction quickly.





## **Wet brakes**

The brakes may fail when you go through a large puddle of water.

To be sure they are working properly:

- Always test the brakes after driving through deep water when safe to do so. The brakes may pull the vehicle to one side or they may not work at all.
- “Dry” the brakes by driving slowly and pressing on the brake pedal lightly for a short distance.

## **Brakes fail**

You will often be warned of brake failure when the brake pedal feels “spongy” and slowly sinks to the floor board as you push them. If the brakes suddenly give out you should:

- “Pump” the brake pedal. This will often build up enough pressure to stop the vehicle. If this does not work:
- Use the hand brake in an on-off pumping motion.
- Shift to a low gear.
- If you are on a steep hill and all else fails, look for something to sideswipe such as bushes, snowbank, guardrail, etc.
- Use your horn and lights to warn other drivers and pedestrians that you are out of control.
- As an extreme method, if you turn off the engine and leave the vehicle in gear, the engine will slow you down. **BE VERY CAREFUL:** If the vehicle ignition switch locks the steering wheel when you turn off the key, you will not be able to steer, and if you have power steering, the steering will become very hard.
- Look for a place to coast to a stop.
- Once you have safely stopped the vehicle, make sure that it is well off the road. Then call for help. Do not try to drive the vehicle to a garage.

## **Direct collision course**

A vehicle suddenly approaches from the opposite direction in your lane and a collision is likely to happen. What do you do? You have several things you can do:

- **STOP QUICKLY** - If you can slow your speed before the crash, this will lessen the impact. If your vehicle is equipped with ABS, push hard on the brake pedal and steer the vehicle in a safe direction. If

your vehicle is not equipped with ABS, push the brake pedal hard and as the vehicle begins to skid quickly, let up on the brake. Then quickly push it down again. Continue this quick pumping action until you have stopped the vehicle. By pumping the brakes, you can stop quickly and still steer the vehicle.

- **TURN QUICKLY** - Head for the shoulder on the **RIGHT-HAND SIDE** of the road and lean on the horn. The other driver might suddenly realize the mistake and steer back onto the left side of the road. **NEVER SWERVE TO THE LEFT** to avoid a crash. The other vehicle might swing back into the path of your vehicle or you might hit other oncoming traffic. Do everything to avoid a crash with another vehicle. Being in a ditch is better than being in a grave.
- **SIDESWIPE** - If you must hit something, try to hit something that will reduce the force of the impact such as a bush or snowbank. As a rule, try to hit with a glancing blow rather than head-on. When you sideswipe an object there is a good chance that you can reduce the impact and the chance of injury.
- **SPEED UP QUICKLY** - Sometimes you can speed up quickly to avoid a collision. This may happen when another vehicle is about to hit you from the side or rear.

Different hazards call for different actions. By always being alert you may have more time to find your escape route.

### **Vehicle on fire or overheating**

A short circuit in the electrical system is the general cause of a fire. If you have a fire, pull off the road quickly, shut off the ignition to cut electrical power and get all passengers away from the vehicle.

**DO NOT OPEN THE HOOD.** Opening the hood allows air to get to the fire and might make it flare up. **DO NOT** use water if gasoline is burning as this will spread the flames. If you have a fire extinguisher, release the hood and open it just enough to aim it underneath. If you can't do this, stand back and call for assistance.

Steam coming from under the hood means that the cooling system has overheated. You should:

- Pull to the side of the road and turn the engine off immediately.
- Raise the hood but **DO NOT** open the radiator cap.
- Send for help.

Driving a vehicle with an overheated cooling system can ruin the engine.

## **Vehicle plunging into water**

A vehicle with windows and doors closed may float for 3-10 minutes. The best escape route is through a window because water pressure makes it hard to open a door. If your vehicle has power windows open them quickly because the water will cause a short circuit in the electrical system.

Vehicles equipped with a front engine will sink nose first. You may have to go to the rear of the vehicle to escape if the vehicle is sinking rapidly.

Most people who do not survive this type of accident are unconscious. If you have fastened your safety belt you might remain conscious and, if you do not panic, you will have time to escape.

## **Headlight failure**

Should the headlights suddenly go out:

- Try the turn signals or emergency flashers. This may give you enough light to guide you as you pull off the road.
- Try the dimmer switch. That will often put the headlights on again.
- Pull off the road as quickly as possible and leave the emergency flashers on.

If the entire vehicle does not have electrical power, the problem probably is with the battery cables. If only the headlights are without power, then a fuse or circuit breaker may be the problem.

## **Stuck gas pedal**

If the gas pedal becomes stuck:

- Keep your eyes on the road.
- Brake firmly to counteract the effects of acceleration.
- Quickly shift into neutral.
- When safe to do so, pull the vehicle off the road.
- Bring the vehicle to a stop and turn off the engine.

## **Power steering failure**

If the power steering fails because the engine has stopped, you should:

- Grip the steering wheel firmly as steering will be difficult.
- Stop the vehicle. You may have to push the brakes hard if the vehicle has power brakes.
- Restart the engine.

## **Hood flies up**

If the hood suddenly flies up you should:

- Immediately reduce your speed and position yourself so as to be able to look through the open area at dashboard level.

In the event your vision is totally blocked:

- Put your head out the window and look around the hood. Use the center line or lane markings as a guide.
- Brake and pull off the road when safe to do so.

## **Stalling on railroad tracks**

In the event the vehicle stalls on railroad tracks:

- If the vehicle has a standard transmission, you can probably move it off the tracks by running the starter while the transmission is in first or second gear.
- If the vehicle has an automatic transmission, try to push the vehicle off the tracks.
- If you cannot get the vehicle off the tracks and a train is coming, abandon the vehicle. Quickly walk alongside the tracks in the direction of the approaching train. This way you will not be struck by pieces of the vehicle when it is struck by the train.

## **Windshield wiper failure**

If the wipers suddenly fail in blinding rain or snow, reduce your speed, roll down the side window and stick your head out so that you can see ahead of you. Then move the vehicle off the highway.

## **Disabled vehicle**

If you must stop along any road in an emergency you should:

- Pull well off the road or onto the shoulder. Never park on a hill or curve, or any other place unless others can see the vehicle from at least 200 feet in each direction.
- Turn on the parking lights or emergency flashers.
- Raise the hood and tie a white cloth (red cloth in a snowstorm) to the driver's door handle or antenna. This tells others drivers that you need help.

- If possible stay with the vehicle until help arrives. If the vehicle is in a hazardous location, get all passengers out of the vehicle and well away from traffic. If you must walk for help, walk on the left edge of the road facing oncoming traffic. Use a flashlight when walking for help at night.

If you have flares or reflectors, place them 200 feet in front and 200 feet to the rear of the vehicle to warn approaching drivers.

## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. If you become stuck in a heavy snow storm or blizzard, attach a \_\_\_\_\_ to your antenna or door handle.
2. Which way should you steer if you have a blow out?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. The basic rule for all driving emergencies is? \_\_\_\_\_
4. If your vehicle is on fire or smoke is coming from the engine compartment you should not \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Your brakes may fail after driving through a puddle. You should test your brakes and dry them by driving slowly and \_\_\_\_\_.
6. If your headlights fail while driving at night you should  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
7. If you must stop along any road in an emergency your vehicle must be visible for \_\_\_\_\_ feet in each direction.

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# PART THIRTEEN

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## *Expressway Driving*

Over the years, thousands of miles of “superhighways” were built in the United States. These roads are multi-lane, controlled access roads upon which you may drive safely and easily for long distances with few interruptions. Expressways are also known as interstate highways, toll roads, throughways, turnpikes and freeways. Some are free and some require a toll. They have two advantages if you know how to use them properly.

- You can get to where you are going sooner.
- You have a better chance of getting there safely.

Expressway driving is different from ordinary driving because you must think and react faster at higher speeds.

Fewer crashes per mile happen on expressways, but those that do are worse because of the high speed that vehicles travel. Most happen when drivers fail to yield to others or follow too closely.

### **SPECIAL FEATURES OF EXPRESSWAYS**

#### **Limited Access**

Limited access means that vehicles can enter or leave expressways only at certain locations where interchanges are found.

#### **Interchanges**

The intersection of 2 highways at different levels (over and under), with separate connecting roads for the movement of traffic from one highway to another is called an interchange. This design lets vehicles cross, enter or leave either highway without interfering with other vehicles.

#### **Before using an Expressway**

Plan your trip ahead so that you will know your entrance, direction and exit. Make sure that both you and your vehicle are in good condition.

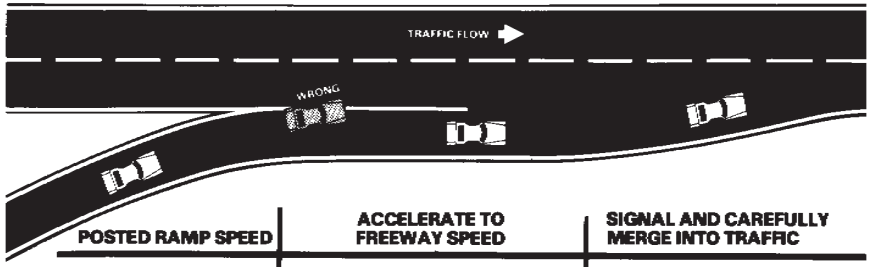
#### **Entering an Expressway**

You enter an expressway on an entrance ramp. These are short, one-way ramps that allow for safe and easy entry onto the freeway. The entrance will take you to the acceleration lane. As you approach and enter the acceleration lane, increase your speed to match that of vehicles on the expressway, if possible.

Watch for an opening, turn on your signal light and merge smoothly with the other traffic. Drivers already on the expressway should allow room for those entering, but the driver entering the expressway must yield to them if they do not. **DO NOT** come to a full stop in the acceleration lane unless traffic conditions are such that you have no other choice.

If there is no acceleration lane, you must always yield or stop if necessary. Do not try to force your way into the traffic stream.

## ENTERING AN EXPRESSWAY



## DRIVING ON THE EXPRESSWAY

**Be Alert!** Use the rearview mirrors. Constantly check the traffic behind you. Always look in the mirror and signal before you change lanes. Stay out of another driver's blind spot. Stay far enough behind or pass.

Carefully check the left lane behind you before trying to pass. Turn your head to check your "blind spot." If it is clear, you may begin your pass. Do not turn back into the right-hand lane until you can see the vehicle you just passed in your rear view mirror.

### Allow plenty of room when passing

Cutting back into the right-hand lane too soon can cause a crash.

### Do not get too close to the vehicle in front of you

Always leave room for an emergency stop. Remember the three-second rule. Double or triple your following distance in bad weather. A rear end collision is the greatest hazard on the expressway.

### Use the turn signals

Be sure to signal every time you change lanes. Do not weave in and out of traffic lanes.

## Drive at a steady pace

Move with the flow of traffic and obey the speed limit.

## Drive in the right or center lane

The left lane is for passing only.

## Stopping on pavement

Not legal on any expressway except in an emergency. If an emergency occurs, make sure your vehicle is well off the road or in the extreme right-hand edge of the breakdown lane. Remember: It is illegal to stop in the breakdown lane to use your cell phone. Find a safe place off of the expressway for such activity.

## Stop driving when you feel tired

Expressway drivers are subject to “highway hypnosis.” Do not try to fight it. Pull off the highway at the first rest stop or service area.

## LEAVING THE EXPRESSWAY

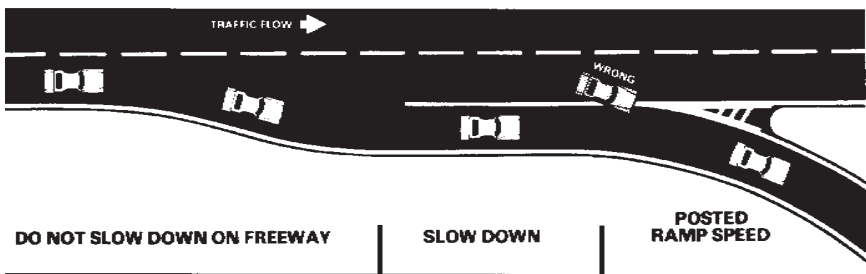
Getting off the expressway at the right place requires advance planning and watching closely for all signs. Prepare for your exit, move into the proper lane well in advance. Signal your intent to exit, move into the deceleration lane and slow your speed as you get ready to enter the exit ramp. Never slow your speed suddenly on the expressway.

As you move into the exit ramp, be ready to stop when you come to an intersecting road.

**If you MISS your exit, you MUST NOT STOP, BACK UP OR TRY TO TURN AROUND.** Drive to the next exit.

**NOTE:** Pedestrians, mopeds, bicycles and motor-driven cycles are not allowed on expressways.

### LEAVING AN EXPRESSWAY





## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. If when driving on a freeway or toll road you miss your exit you should \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Two advantages of expressway driving are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The acceleration lane should be used to \_\_\_\_\_ the speed of vehicles already on the expressway if possible.
4. The left lane on an interstate is for \_\_\_\_\_ only.
5. It is important to maintain an adequate interval between yours and other vehicles. This is called the \_\_\_\_\_.

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# PART FOURTEEN

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## *Alcohol, Drugs and Driving*

### **Drinking and driving**

Alcohol is by far the greatest hazard for a driver. Drunk drivers cause more than half the fatal crashes. More than 25,000 people die each year in drinking related accidents in the United States. If you drink, even just a little, your chances of a crash are **SEVEN TIMES GREATER** than if you are completely sober. No one can drink and drive safely. Your level of experience does not matter.

### **Why drinking and driving is dangerous**

When alcohol enters your stomach it goes into your blood and to all parts of your body. It reaches your brain in 20 to 40 minutes. In your brain, alcohol affects those parts that control your judgment and skill. As the amount of alcohol goes up, your skill goes down.

The worst part about alcohol is that your judgment is the first thing to go. Good judgment is important to driving. Judgment also helps you know when to stop drinking. When judgment is affected, you do not know when you have had too much.

### **Facts about alcohol**

Alcohol slows you down. Alcohol does not pep you up. Normal reflexes are slowed. Alcohol interferes with judgment and reduces alertness and vision. Some people seem stimulated after drinking. This is because the alcohol has caused loss of caution and self-control.

It does not matter whether you are drinking beer, wine, or hard liquor. It is the amount of alcohol that enters the bloodstream that counts. An important fact to keep in mind is that the type of alcoholic beverage consumed makes no difference.

Alcohol can affect you differently at different times. Drinking on an empty stomach will affect the body faster than drinking after eating. Alcohol also affects you more if you are taking medicine or are tired.

After drinking, there is nothing that will reduce the effects of alcohol except **TIME**. Coffee, food, fresh air, exercise or cold showers might wake you up, but they will not sober you up. The liver burns alcohol at a set rate and eliminates it through the kidneys. The lungs also eliminate alcohol through your breath. Your body takes about an hour to get rid of each ounce of alcohol.

An individual's weight is a factor in deciding the amount a person can drink without becoming an unsafe driver. Thinner, lighter persons must be even more careful. Whether you are a light or a heavy person, alcohol should only be used with moderation, it is a dangerous drug.

### Blood Alcohol Content (BAC)

Blood alcohol content or "BAC level" is the ratio of alcohol to blood present in the bloodstream at any given time. In New Hampshire and in many states a BAC level of .02% if you are under the age of 21 is evidence that you are legally intoxicated. At .08% BAC, individuals have suffered a severe loss of judgment.

Look at the chart located below. This chart will help you to decide your average BAC level when:

1. You know the number of drinks consumed.
2. The time in which they are consumed.
3. You know your body weight.

However, no chart can include individual reactions to alcohol. You should consider personal limits while using this chart.

		BAC—END OF ONE HOUR							
Number of Drinks <sup>2</sup> in Period		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Weight (lbs.)									
100		.02	.06	.09	.13	.17	.21	.25	.28
120		.02	.04	.08	.11	.14	.17	.20	.23
140		.01	.04	.06	.09	.12	.15	.17	.20
160		.01	.03	.05	.08	.10	.13	.15	.17
180		.01	.03	.04	.07	.09	.11	.13	.15
200		.00	.02	.04	.06	.08	.09	.12	.13
220		.00	.02	.04	.05	.07	.09	.10	.12
240		.00	.02	.03	.04	.06	.08	.09	.11

		BAC—END OF THREE HOURS							
Number of Drinks <sup>2</sup> in Period		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Weight (lbs.)									
100		.07	.10	.14	.18	.22	.25	.29	
120		.04	.08	.11	.14	.17	.20	.24	
140		.03	.06	.09	.12	.14	.17	.20	
160		.02	.04	.07	.09	.12	.14	.17	
180		.02	.04	.06	.08	.10	.12	.14	
200		.01	.03	.04	.07	.09	.10	.12	
220		.01	.02	.04	.06	.07	.09	.11	
240		.00	.02	.03	.04	.06	.08	.09	

		BAC—END OF TWO HOURS							
Number of Drinks <sup>2</sup> in Period		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Weight (lbs.)									
100		.04	.08	.12	.16	.19	.23	.27	.31
120		.03	.06	.09	.13	.16	.19	.22	.25
140		.02	.05	.08	.10	.13	.16	.18	.21
160		.02	.04	.06	.09	.11	.13	.16	.18
180		.01	.03	.05	.07	.09	.12	.14	.16
200		.01	.03	.04	.06	.08	.10	.12	.14
220		.00	.02	.04	.05	.07	.09	.11	.12
240		.00	.02	.03	.04	.06	.08	.09	.11

		BAC—END OF FOUR HOURS								
Number of Drinks <sup>2</sup> in Period		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Weight (lbs.)										
100		.05	.09	.13	.16	.20	.24	.28	.31	
120		.03	.06	.09	.13	.15	.19	.22	.25	
140		.02	.04	.07	.10	.13	.15	.18	.21	
160		.01	.03	.06	.08	.10	.13	.15	.17	
180		.00	.02	.04	.06	.09	.11	.13	.15	
200		.00	.01	.03	.05	.07	.09	.11	.13	
220		.00	.01	.02	.04	.06	.08	.09	.11	
240		.00	.00	.02	.03	.04	.06	.08	.09	

<sup>1</sup>Estimated Blood-Alcohol concentration by number of drinks per period of time and by body weight<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup>From formula developed by E.M.P. Widmark, derived by the New Hampshire Program on Alcohol and Drug Abuse.

<sup>3</sup>One drink equals one ounce of 100 proof liquor.

Whether you are in condition to drive depends on many factors involving your personality, attitude, stomach contents, physical condition, and metabolism. BAC levels as low as .02% can affect your driving ability. Scientific tests have shown that everyone is affected at .08% and above.

For every percentage point you add to your BAC, you multiply your chances of having a crash several times over. **The safest rule is, if you have been drinking, do not drive and do not drink if you are going to drive, have someone else drive you.**

**An individual must have reached the age of 21 in order to legally purchase and consume alcohol. It is illegal for people who are 21 years of age or over to purchase and provide alcoholic beverages for persons who are under the age of 21.**

### **Transportation of alcoholic beverages by a minor**

No driver under age 21, unless accompanied by a parent, legal guardian or legal age spouse, shall transport any form of liquor or alcoholic beverage in any part of a vehicle. License/operating privileges may be suspended for 60 days for any driver violating this section.

### **Open container**

No driver, except as provided herein, shall transport, carry, possess or have ANY liquor OR alcoholic beverage within the passenger area of any motor vehicle upon any way in this state except in the original container and with an unbroken seal. Securely capped, partially filled containers of liquor or alcoholic beverages shall be stored and transported in the trunk of the motor vehicle. If the vehicle does NOT have a trunk, such container shall be stored and transported in a compartment or area LEAST accessible to the driver.

A first offense violation of this section may result in a 60-day suspension of license/operating privileges and up to one year for a second or subsequent offense.

EXCEPTIONS: Does NOT apply to persons transporting, carrying, possessing or having any liquor or alcoholic beverage in a chartered bus, taxi or limousine for hire PROVIDED the driver of any vehicle does NOT have any liquor or beverage in or about the driver's area.

### **IMPLIED CONSENT**

“Implied Consent” means that any person who drives a motor vehicle in this state has consented to having his/her blood, breath or urine, OR ANY combination, tested if arrested for an alcohol or drug offense under RSA 265-A. These tests are of the officer's choosing.

If you refuse a test or tests, your license/operating privileges shall be suspended for 180 days. However, if you have a prior refusal or prior conviction for driving while intoxicated on your record within 10 years, the suspension shall be for 2 years. Test refusal penalties cannot run concurrently with any other penalties. (For example: you refused to test and a 180-day suspension was issued; subsequently, the court convicted you for driving while intoxicated and assessed a 90-day revocation - the total penalty is now 270 days.)

## **ADMINISTRATIVE LICENSE SUSPENSION**

“Administrative License Suspension” provides for a license suspension when any person submits to a test which shows an alcohol concentration at or above the legal limit. The legal limits are 0.08 for persons 21 years of age or older and 0.02 for those under age 21 years of age. If you submit to a test and the results are at or above the legal limit, your license/operating privileges shall be suspended for six (6) months. However, under New Hampshire law, if you have prior test results OR a prior refusal on your record within 10 years, the suspension shall be 2 years.

When you have been suspended for “TEST RESULTS” and you are convicted on criminal charges arising out of the same event, both the suspension and the court ordered revocation shall be imposed, however, the total period of suspension and revocation shall NOT exceed the longer of the two periods.

### **Penalties for driving a vehicle under the influence of alcohol or drugs may include any of the following:**

- Fines
- Driver license suspension
- Mandatory jail sentence
- Completion of a State approved alcohol program
- Proof of insurance in the form of an SR22 certificate
- The court can order the installation of an ignition interlock device and additional penalties.

## **DRUGS**

Almost any drug can affect your driving skills. Here are a few things to remember.

- Most drugs that you take for headaches, colds, hay fever, allergy, or to calm your nerves can make you drowsy and can affect your ability to control a vehicle.
- When taking prescription medicine, it is important to ask your doctor about any possible side effects that relate to driving.
- “Pep pills,” “uppers,” “speed” and “diet pills” can make you alert for a short time, but later they can make you nervous, dizzy and not able to concentrate. They also affect your vision.
- Tranquilizers or sedatives make you drowsy and make your driving very dangerous.
- Studies have shown that people who drive after smoking marijuana make more mistakes and get arrested for traffic violations more than other drivers. They also have more trouble adjusting to glaring headlights. Marijuana, especially in combination with alcohol, is increasingly a factor in fatal traffic crashes in New Hampshire.
- The most dangerous types of drugs can only be obtained illegally. LSD and heroin are examples. They make users unaware or indifferent to their surroundings and unable to safely drive a motor vehicle.
- Many drugs have unexpected effects when they are taken with alcohol. Drugs and alcohol should never be used simultaneously.

Make sure you know what effect any drug you take can have upon you. Read the label of any prescription and over the counter drug you purchase. Any drug that “may cause drowsiness or dizziness” is one you should not take before driving.

### **Penalty for possession of a controlled drug**

Any person who drives a motor vehicle while in possession of a controlled drug shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and their license shall be revoked from 60 days to 2 years.

## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. If you are under 21 years old a blood alcohol level of \_\_\_\_\_% is legal evidence of intoxication in New Hampshire.
2. If you are over 21 years old a blood alcohol level of \_\_\_\_\_% is legal evidence of intoxication in New Hampshire.
3. What is the penalty for operating a motor vehicle while being in possession of a controlled drug? \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Any person refusing to have his or her blood, breath or urine tested if arrested for an alcohol or drug offence shall lose their license for at least \_\_\_\_\_ days.
5. Alcoholic beverages may be transported by a person under age 21 in a motor vehicle upon a public way only if \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Alcoholic beverages may be transported in a motor vehicle by a person 21 years of age or older if \_\_\_\_\_.

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# PART FIFTEEN

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## *Young and Older Drivers*

### **The young driver**

Youth can be an advantage when driving. If you are under 25 years of age, the odds are that your depth perception, visual acuity, reaction time and reflexes are better than older drivers. Inexperience is your biggest disadvantage. Your age group make up less than 15 percent of all drivers, yet it is involved in nearly 51 percent of all highway crashes. This group also has nearly 22 percent of the drivers involved in fatal crashes. This is why your insurance rates are higher. Thus, your quick reactions cannot totally compensate for your inexperience.

Remember that you are new at driving. It takes years to develop all the skills you need. Having a license does not make you a good driver. It simply means that you have met the minimum standards that the Division of Motor Vehicles has set. You have the potential to become a good driver if you continue to work hard and maintain a proper attitude.

Research conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration shows which behaviors contribute to teen-related crashes. Inexperience and immaturity combined with speed, drinking and driving, not wearing seat belts, distracted driving (cell phone use, loud music, other teen passengers, etc.), drowsy driving, nighttime driving, and other drug use aggravated this problem

### **The older driver**

When the number of miles driven is considered, crash rates increase for drivers 55 years of age and older. There are over 25 million drivers over the age of 55 years old in the United States. This is nearly 25 percent of all drivers and the number is growing steadily.

People age at different rates, both mentally and physically. At some time, however, you will probably be affected in the following way:

- **EYESIGHT** - In your late 30's, your field of vision decreases, you need more light to see clearly and you are more sensitive to glare. Also, it takes you longer to get used to the dark.
- **HEARING** - More than 40 percent of drivers over 65 years of age (especially men) have hearing defects.



- REFLEXES - Your body cannot react as quickly as when you were younger.

Although older drivers are generally very careful and drive at slower speeds, they still have a higher crash rate than middle-aged drivers. Usually, people drive less as they grow older. However, when older people have a crash they are more likely to be killed than a younger or middle-aged driver because their bodies are less able to withstand the trauma of the crash.

Some older drivers go so slowly and hesitantly that they become involved in rear end crashes, or cause other drivers to take unnecessary chances.

Many older drivers realize when the time has come to give up driving and voluntarily surrender their licenses to the Division of Motor Vehicles.

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## PART SIXTEEN

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### *Accidents and Financial Responsibility*

No one wants to have a crash. However, crashes do happen, people are injured and killed, vehicles are wrecked and property is damaged. Each year in New Hampshire more than 30,000 crashes are reported.

Since 1900, motor vehicle deaths in the United States have totaled nearly three million.

#### **Defensive driving**

If every driver always obeyed the rules and always drove sensibly, driving would be simpler and safer. Unfortunately, this ideal situation does not exist. Instead, we often meet drivers who drive recklessly, including other highway users, such as pedestrians and bicyclists, who also ignore the rules that apply to them.

To protect yourself, you must learn to drive defensively. This means you must watch for the illegal acts and driving errors of others. You must be willing to adjust your own driving so that you will not be involved in a crash. Also, you must always behave correctly and sensibly so that you do not confuse other drivers.

The defensive driving rules are simple and easy to follow. They are:

- Stay alert and keep your eyes moving so that you can always see what is going on around you.
- Look for trouble spots developing ahead of you, to your sides, and behind you.
- Always keep a proper distance from the vehicle in front of you.
- Expect the other driver to do the wrong thing and have a plan of action prepared if an error is made.

#### **Protecting yourself in an accident**

You may not always successfully avoid a crash. If you know your vehicle is about to be hit by another, you should do all you can to keep injuries to a minimum.

If you are about to be hit from the rear:

- Be ready to apply your brake so that you will not be pushed into another vehicle.
- Brace yourself between the steering wheel and the back of your seat.
- Press your head firmly against your head rest.

If you are about to be hit from the side:

- Brace yourself with the steering wheel to keep from being thrown against the side of the vehicle.
- Get ready to steer quickly so that you can try to control the vehicle.

If you are about to be hit from the front:

- If wearing a shoulder strap or seat belt, brace yourself between the steering wheel and back of your seat. Avoid placing your arms over your face as additional injury may occur if the air bag deploys.
- If not wearing a shoulder strap or seat belt, throw yourself across the seat so that you will not hit the steering column or the windshield.

If you are involved in a crash:

- STOP
- If you can, move your vehicle off the road so that you do not block traffic.
- Give aid to any injured people, but do not move them unless necessary.
- Be sure that an ambulance has been sent for, if required.
- Send for the police, if necessary.
- Get the names and addresses of all people involved in the crash and of any witnesses. Get the names and addresses of any injured persons.
- **Record the other driver's:**
  - a) Name and address
  - b) Driver's license number and state of issue
  - c) License plate number and state of issue
  - d) Make of vehicle
  - e) Model and year of vehicle

- f) Damage to vehicle
- g) Insurance company name
- h) Names and addresses of passengers
- Give the other driver this same information about yourself.
- Note the details of the crash to help you when you complete crash reports and insurance forms. These details should include date, time, exact location, road conditions, speed of each vehicle, direction each vehicle was traveling and damage to any property.
- If the crash involves a parked vehicle or damage to other property, try to find the owner. If you cannot, leave a note in a place where it can be seen. The note should contain the same information as above and the date and time of the crash. You should then immediately report the crash to the police.
- See a doctor as soon as you can if you are shaken up. Some injuries may not show until later.
- Notify your insurance company at once.
- Give complete information about the crash.

### **Reporting the accident**

New Hampshire law requires that if anyone is killed or injured or if the combined property damage totals more than \$1,000, *you must file an official crash report to the Division of Motor Vehicles in Concord within 15 days.*

**If the crash is investigated by a police officer, you are not required to file a separate report to the Division of Motor Vehicles. The report filed by the police officer will satisfy the requirements, however, you can also file a report if you so choose.**

Forms for filing a crash report, Operator Report DSMV 400, can be obtained from police at the scene or at any motor vehicle substation or local police station. They may also be downloaded and printed from the Department of Safety web site: [www.nh.gov/safety/division/dmv/forms.htm](http://www.nh.gov/safety/division/dmv/forms.htm), under the heading Documents and Forms.

If the driver is injured and cannot complete the report, it can be filed by a passenger or the owner of the vehicle.

If you are uncertain whether the combined property damage is over \$1,000, it is best to file the report with the Division of Motor Vehicles.

## **If you arrive at the scene of a crash**

- Park your vehicle off the road and turn on your emergency flashers.
- If you have flares or reflectors place them 200 feet or more in front of and behind the crash scene to warn approaching vehicles. Other people in your vehicle or bystanders should be placed on both sides of the crash off the roadway to warn approaching vehicles.
- Send someone to call the police.
- Turn off the ignition of the vehicles involved in the crash to prevent a fire.
- If a person is pinned in a vehicle, but is otherwise free from injury, crawl into the vehicle and try to release him. If people are injured, **DO NOT** try to move them unless the vehicle is on fire. In this case, make sure their head and spine are firmly supported.
- In case of fire, try to put it out with a fire extinguisher, blanket, or dirt.
- If there are fallen electrical wires at the scene, do not go near them or allow anyone else to do so. High voltage wires can transmit lethal voltage through the ground for distances of several hundred feet, and even further if the ground is wet. If you are in the vehicle and a wire has fallen across it, remain in the vehicle and have someone send for the power company to come and shut off the current. In a life or death situation, when escape from the vehicle becomes necessary, a long, dry piece of wood can sometimes be used to push a wire off a vehicle, or another vehicle can be used to push the vehicle off the wire. If another vehicle is used, the drivers must be sure both vehicles are clear of the wire before exiting either vehicle. If the wire cannot be dislodged (and only if necessary), a safe exit can sometimes be made if the passengers jump clear of the vehicle without touching the vehicle and the ground simultaneously.
- If gasoline is leaking at the scene, do not smoke or allow anyone else to smoke in or around the vehicles.
- If you have been trained in first aid, you should help those injured. If not, follow these tips:
  - a) Make sure an ambulance is on the way.
  - b) Stop bleeding by applying direct pressure over the wound. A clean piece of material such as a tissue or handkerchief may be used. Keep the victim quiet and lying down. Always protect yourself.

Use some sort of barrier between you and the injured ie. rubber gloves, plastic bag, etc.

- c) Stay with the injured people until an ambulance or other vehicle is available to take them to the hospital.
- If you are not the first person at the scene of the crash and your help is not needed, drive on. Do not slow down or stop just to see what is happening. Move on so that you do not interfere with the arrival of police and emergency equipment.

### **If you hit a dog**

Any driver who knowingly hits a dog with a motor vehicle shall report the incident to the dog's owner or to a police officer. Failure to report this incident is against the law.

## **INSURANCE**

Some states require motorists to purchase automobile insurance before they can register a vehicle. New Hampshire has no mandatory insurance law, so you can drive a vehicle without insurance.

However, you should realize that you are risking a great deal if you do so. If you are involved in a crash, you could be held responsible for the payment of all damages to the other person's property and the payment of all medical bills arising out of the crash.

If you cannot pay these bills, and sometimes they are very costly, the New Hampshire financial responsibility law requires that the Division of Motor Vehicles suspend your license until a settlement has been reached.

Because of an uninsured accident, you may be required to carry insurance for several years after the accident. When insurance is required by the Division of Motor Vehicles, an SR-22 certificate is filed for you by an insurance company. This insurance gives protection to you and to the occupants of your vehicle and the damages to the vehicle that your vehicle may strike. It also protects any person for whom you are responsible who has your permission to operate your vehicle.

In New Hampshire the financial responsibility limits are:

- At least \$25,000 due to injury or death to any one person, and
- At least \$50,000 due to any one accident resulting in injury or death of more than one person, and
- At least \$25,000 for damage to property of others.

## **When financial responsibility can be required**

The Division of Motor Vehicles may require that persons have insurance for the protection of themselves and others. Otherwise it can suspend or revoke the driver license and registration in case of the following convictions:

1. Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
2. Failing to stop and report when involved in a crash.
3. Homicide arising out of the operation of a motor vehicle.
4. The second time for reckless driving.
5. After review of a person's driver record for any traffic violation (just cause after hearing).

Although New Hampshire does not have a requirement for you to buy insurance, you can exercise your own free will. **The Division of Motor Vehicles strongly recommends and urges all owners of motor vehicles to carry standard liability and property damage insurance.**

**A license to drive a motor vehicle is not a person's right. It is a privilege that the State of New Hampshire gives to those persons who have shown that they can safely drive a motor vehicle. This privilege may be taken away at any time for many reasons after a hearing.**

## **ORIGINAL LICENSES**

The Director, upon receiving proper application for an original driver's license, may in his/her discretion issue a license designated as an original, with such designation to be effective until the fifth anniversary of the license holder's date of birth following the date of issuance to allow such applicant to gain proper driving habits, attitudes and experience. The director, after hearing, may suspend or revoke any such original license for good cause upon receipt of proper evidence or information of misconduct, misuse or abuse of such driving privileges. (RSA 263:14)

*Please note that the authority noted above means that if you are under 20 years of age and convicted of a motor vehicle violation, your license will be suspended. Your license will be suspended for 20 days first offense, 45 days second offense, and 90 days for a third or subsequent offense.*

## **DRIVING WHILE UNDER SUSPENSION / REVOCATION**

Should you be convicted of driving while under suspension or revocation, your period of suspension can be extended. In addition, this can result in a jail sentence.

### **Demerit points assessed after court conviction (based upon date of violation):**

The Director of Motor Vehicles reminds all motorists that points are assessed for convictions of violations. The number of points assessed depends on the seriousness of the offense with the point value being 1, 2, 3, 4 or 6.

#### **1 POINT**

- Operating without vehicle registration available in the vehicle.
- Failing to obey inspection requirements.
- Failing to obtain a N.H. driver's license.

#### **2 POINTS**

- Driving an unregistered vehicle.
- Failing to produce a license when requested by a police officer.
- Allowing an improper person to operate a motor vehicle. (Improper person is an unlicensed person, under aged person, person under suspension or revocation, etc.)
- Failing to abide by license restrictions.
- Operating a vehicle with improper class of license.
- Operating without a motorcycle license.
- Failing to comply with directions from a police officer.
- Allowing an improper person to operate a commercial motor vehicle.

#### **3 POINTS**

- Disobeying any traffic control device.
- Following too closely.
- Driving on a sidewalk.
- Failing to yield right of way.



- Failing to obey yield sign.
- Failing to obey stop and yield signs.
- Failing to use due care when a partially or totally blind person crosses the street.
- Failing to signal a turn.
- Improper conduct at a railroad crossing.
- Illegal backing.
- Obstructing the driver's view (by persons, objects, etc.).
- Opening and closing vehicle doors improperly.
- Coasting.
- Following fire trucks too closely.
- Carrying passengers in a truck not so designed.
- Speeding at less than 25 MPH above the posted limit.
- Misuse of plates.
- Misuse or failure to display plates.
- Abandoning a vehicle.

#### **4 POINTS**

- Driving without a license.
- Speeding at 25 MPH or more above the posted limit.
- Failing to drive on the right side of the road.
- Improper passing.
- Yellow line violation.
- Driving without required insurance.

#### **6 POINTS**

- Improper use of a registration certificate.
- False report of a theft.
- Removal or changes to vehicle identification number.
- Improper use of license.

- Modifying or forging inspection sticker or registration decal.
- School bus violation.
- Title alteration.
- Taking motor vehicle without the owner's consent.
- Odometer tampering.
- Lending a driver's license to an under-age person to buy alcoholic beverages.
- Driving after license revocation or suspension.
- Failure to stop immediately after a crash.
- Disobeying a police officer.
- Racing and/or reckless driving.
- Driving a motor vehicle while in possession of controlled drug(s).
- Driving while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Aggravated DWI.

**Drivers under 18 years of age are subject to these suspensions:**

- 6 points in one calendar year = up to 3 months suspension.
- 12 points in two consecutive calendar years = up to 6 months suspension.
- 18 points in three consecutive calendar years = up to 1 year suspension.

**Drivers age 18, 19 or 20 are subject to these suspensions:**

- 9 points in one calendar year = up to 3 months suspension.
- 15 points in two consecutive calendar years = up to 6 months suspension.
- 21 points in three consecutive calendar years = up to 1 year suspension.

**Drivers 21 years of age or older are subject to these suspensions:**

- 12 points in one calendar year = up to 3 months suspension.
- 18 points in two consecutive calendar years = up to 6 months suspension.
- 24 points in three consecutive calendar years = up to 1 year suspension.

Any person who has accumulated points is eligible for a 3 point reduction credit ONCE ONLY during any 3 consecutive calendar year period. To be eligible for this point reduction credit you must successfully complete an approved driver improvement program. Program fees and locations are NOT established by the state. Completion of the program does not affect the number of points on your driving record.

## **HABITUAL OFFENDERS**

The New Hampshire legislature has declared it to be a policy of the State of New Hampshire to provide maximum safety for all persons who travel or otherwise use the highways of this state.

This policy denies the privilege of driving vehicles to persons who, by their conduct and record, have shown their indifference for the safety and welfare of others, disrespect for the laws of the state, and indifference to orders of the courts and of administrative agencies.

When it is decided that any person is a Habitual Offender within the meaning of the law, the Director shall issue an order requiring that the person appear for a hearing to show cause why that person should not be barred from driving a motor vehicle in this state.

If the Director finds that the person's record contains the number of valid convictions required by law, the Director shall revoke the person's driver license and direct the person not to drive a motor vehicle in this state for 1-4 years.

If, after having been declared a Habitual Offender and being convicted of driving a vehicle on a way of this state while the order is in effect, that person shall be subject to imprisonment for not less than one year, and up to 5 years.

## **TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE**

1. When you are involved in an accident causing death, personal injury, or aggregate damage over \$ \_\_\_\_\_ you must submit a written report to the Department of Motor Vehicles
2. If you are required to submit an official crash report to the Department of Motor Vehicles in Concord it must be received within \_\_\_\_\_ days of the crash.
3. A license to drive is a \_\_\_\_\_ and not a right in New Hampshire.
4. Do not move an injured passenger unless there is a \_\_\_\_\_.
5. If you are under 20 years of age and you are convicted of a motor vehicle violation your license will be \_\_\_\_\_.

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# PART SEVENTEEN

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## *Safety and Energy Conservation*

Passenger vehicles are more than 28 percent of all the gasoline and oil used in the United States. If the fuel usage of each vehicle could be reduced by 15 percent through better planning, better driving habits and better maintenance, the U.S. would use over 28 million fewer gallons of gasoline per day. This would save you money, cut pollution and reduce fuel shortages.

Here are a few tips on saving gas and driving safer at the same time

- **DRIVE SLOWLY** - As speed increases, so does wind resistance against your vehicle.
- **DRIVE STEADILY** - Speeding up and slowing down uses more gasoline than does driving at a steady pace. Avoid a lot of passing and surges of speed.
- **THINK AHEAD AND LOOK AHEAD** - If the light ahead is red, ease into a stop instead of jamming on the brakes.
- **START SLOWLY** - Speed up gently, except when entering high speed traffic lanes or when passing.
- **AVOID EXCESSIVE IDLING** - The average vehicle uses a cup of gasoline every 6 minutes when idling. When you stop the vehicle do not idle the engine for more than 1 minute. If you are waiting for someone, turn off the engine. It takes less gasoline to restart the vehicle than it does to let it idle.
- **KEEP WINDOWS CLOSED AT HIGH SPEED** - Wind entering the vehicle creates added wind resistance which uses more gasoline. At high speeds, running the air conditioner on hot days is actually more economical than riding with your windows down. However, at low speeds you should turn off the air conditioner and open the windows.
- **STORE LUGGAGE INSIDE THE VEHICLE** - Roof racks create additional wind resistance and increase gasoline consumption.
- **SELECT LESS TRAVELED AND CONGESTED ROUTES** - You will not have to stop and brake as often.

- **TAKE GOOD CARE OF THE VEHICLE** - Have the engine tuned up when necessary. Keep the tires properly inflated and the wheels properly aligned. Radial tires give better gasoline mileage.
- **COMBINE TRIPS** - Combine short shopping and business trips to reduce the total number of miles traveled.
- **CAR POOL** - To work, shopping and recreation. It not only saves gasoline, it can be more fun than riding alone.

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# PART EIGHTEEN

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## *Sharing the Road*

### SHARING THE ROAD WITH OTHERS

Distracted driving accidents are the fastest growing accident category. Distracted driving is caused by a driver who is concentrating on something other than his/her driving. There are several different types of distracted driving from cell phone use to watching someone change a flat tire or having a conversation with your passenger. It is our responsibility as a driver to focus on the task at hand and be aware of our surroundings.

- Most distracted driver accidents happen between 30-35 m.p.h.
- Most distracted driver accidents happen between the hours of 2 pm and 6 pm.
- Distracted driver crashes occur more frequently on Thursday and Friday.
- The months of June, July and August have the highest distracted driver accident rates.

### SHARING THE ROAD WITH TRUCKS

Sharing the road safely with trucks requires an understanding of their characteristics and limitations. Trucks can be up to 120 feet long and weigh 80,000 pounds. A fully loaded tractor-trailer, traveling at 55 mph, needs 3 times the distance a car needs to stop. Trucks need more space for making right hand turns. They are more difficult to maneuver, heavier, and require much more time when stopping, or going up a hill.

The larger the truck, the larger the blind spots. Knowing where a truck's blind spots are, the "No Zones", will help you to avoid these dangerous areas.

The "No-Zone" includes the following shaded areas:



It is important that you not remain in the “No Zone” any longer than is needed to safely pass a truck.

Try not to be directly in front of the truck. In dry conditions, use the 3-second rule to keep enough distance between you and the truck behind you.

Apply the same rule while traveling behind a truck. By applying the 3-second rule it gives you enough time and space for you to respond in the event of an emergency.

## SHARING THE ROAD WITH MOTORCYCLES

The increasing popularity of motorcycle riding is shown by the number of riders and 2 wheeled motor vehicles on our streets and highways. Motorcycle crash statistics show that many of the crashes involve riders with little experience. Half of the crashes that occur between the automobile driver and the motorcyclist are the fault of the automobile driver. Motorcyclists have the same rights and responsibilities on public roads as other highway users. Legally, while everyone must obey the same traffic laws, there are special situations and conditions you need to be aware of so you can share the road safely with those who choose to use 2 wheels.

Why is it so important that you be aware of motorcycles? Mainly because motorcycles are not easily identified in traffic. Motorcycles are only about 2 feet wide compared with the 5-6 foot width of an automobile. They are easily hidden in the vehicle’s blind spot. Even when seen, it is difficult for some drivers to judge how far away motorcyclists are. Finally, even when seen and the distance away is correctly judged, some drivers cannot tell how fast motorcycles are going.

Being alert to this special visual problem and how motorcyclists react to some situations can help you to avoid colliding with a motorcyclist in traffic. Following are a few things that call for special attention by motorcyclists and by you.

- **LEFT TURNS** in front of an oncoming motorcyclist account for many serious crashes. The problem of not seeing the motorcyclist is two-fold; vehicle drivers may fail to pick the cyclist out of the traffic scene, or drivers may fail to judge the speed of the oncoming motorcycle. The correct behavior is to **look and look again. Make sure you see the motorcycle and know its speed before you make a left turn.**
- **TURN SIGNALS** do not automatically cancel out on most motorcycles. At times, the rider may forget to turn the signal off. Before you make a turn in front of a motorcyclist, **BE SURE THE RIDER IS TURNING** and not continuing straight ahead into your path with a forgotten turn signal still blinking.

- **FOLLOWING DISTANCE** behind the motorcyclist should be the same 3-second following distance you would give ANY OTHER VEHICLE. Following too closely may make riders nervous, causing their attention to be taken from the road and traffic ahead.
- **LANE USAGE** for the motorcyclist is vital. Motorcycles are entitled to the same full lane width as all other vehicles. Good motorcycle drivers are CONSTANTLY CHANGING positions within that lane to help their ability to see and be seen, and to avoid objects in or near the road. Never move into the same lane alongside a motorcycle, even if the lane is wide and the cyclist is riding far to one side. Do not try to crowd cyclists in any way or force them to the edge of the road. It is not only illegal, it is extremely hazardous.
- **BAD WEATHER AND SLIPPERY SURFACES** can be real problems for motorcycles. Allow even more following distance for a motorcyclist when it is raining or the road surface is wet and slippery. Skilled motorcycle riders will slow down under these conditions. Remember, motorcycles only have 2 wheels compared to your four. Also, be alert to the problem of glare that rain and wet roads create, especially at night. It is easy to lose sight of a motorcycle and its rider under the best of conditions. Rain, wind, dust and smog affect the cyclist's vision far more than yours in an enclosed vehicle. The cyclist's face shield, windshield or goggles help but cannot completely make up for poor visibility under these conditions.
- **CROSS WINDS** can be bad for motorcycles. Windy conditions can actually move a motorcycle out of its lane of travel. Areas to look out for are wide open, long stretches of highways and bridges. Fast moving large trucks have been known to create wind blasts which can startle a cyclist and, under certain conditions, actually move cyclists out of their path of travel. Be alert to these conditions so you can prepare yourself for a possible quick change in speed or direction of the motorcycle.
- **ROAD SURFACES** and debris in the road that do not normally affect other vehicles can create problems for the cyclist. Gravel, debris, pavement seams, small animals and even manhole covers may cause the motorcyclist to change speed or direction.
- **RAILROAD GRADE CROSSINGS** may be rough or cross the road at an angle. The rider may slow down or change direction so that the tracks can be crossed head on. The cyclist may rise up off the seat to help cushion the shock of a rough crossing.



- **METAL OR GRATED BRIDGES** create a wobbling sensation in the front tire of the motorcycle greater than the feeling you experience in your vehicle. This wobbling sensation may cause the inexperienced motorcyclist to quickly change direction or slow down.
- **GROOVED PAVEMENT** when first run onto by a motorcyclist may create a similar wobbling sensation. Because of this feeling, the inexperienced rider may slow down or change lanes suddenly.

Be aware of these situations and follow these suggestions to share the road safely with motorcyclists. Regardless of who is legally at fault in vehicle/cycle crashes, the motorcyclist usually is the loser. Your general awareness of motorcycles in traffic combined with your special attention in the situations described above can reduce motorcycle crashes, injuries and deaths.

Knowing how to operate a motorcycle safely takes experience and skill. The Department of Safety offers an official statewide motorcycle rider training program for residents of New Hampshire.

The program is designed to increase motorcycle safety on New Hampshire streets and highways. It accomplishes the task by providing motorcycle training courses for both novice and experienced riders and increases the public's awareness of motorcyclists on the road.

Any New Hampshire resident who is interested in taking the course may call (603) 227-4025 for further information. Students who successfully complete the basic course are exempt from taking the required state skills test to obtain a motorcycle license or endorsement.

## **SHARING THE ROAD WITH BICYCLES**

Because of the great increase in the number of bicycles on the road, drivers must be extra alert for bicycles at all times.

When passing bicyclists, every driver of a vehicle shall exercise due care by leaving a reasonable and prudent distance between the vehicle and the bicycle. The distance shall be presumed to be reasonable and prudent if it is at least 3 feet when the vehicle is traveling at 30 miles per hour or less, with one additional foot of clearance required for every 10 miles per hour above 30 miles per hour. If there is no room to pass because traffic is approaching, wait until traffic has gone by before passing.

When meeting an oncoming bicyclist at night, always dim your lights.

Extra care is needed during the morning and afternoon when bicyclists are traveling between home and work, school or play.

Bicyclists are expected to know and obey all traffic laws and regulations. However, whether the bicyclist is operating lawfully or not, always give them the benefit of the doubt.

Bicycles are small and lightweight and almost any type of collision will result in injury or death to the rider.

**Bicyclists must:**

- Obey the same rules of the road as drivers of other vehicles.
- Signal turns and stops unless both hands are required on the handlebars for balance.
- If riding 2 abreast, keep within a single lane and do not hold up traffic (riding more than 2 abreast is against the law).
- Ride single file if riding 2 abreast impedes the flow of vehicle traffic.
- Never ride on sidewalks (they are for pedestrians).
- Never hang onto other vehicles in any manner.
- Yield the right of way to pedestrians.
- Never carry a passenger unless in an attached seat.
- Never carry articles that interfere with the control of the bicycle.
- Ride in the same direction as other vehicles.

**The following equipment is required on all bicycles:**

- Reflector.
- Brakes strong enough to stop one wheel on dry, level, clean pavement.
- For riding after dark, a white headlight.
- A bicyclist must stop on request of a police officer who wishes to inspect the bicycle.
- No person less than 16 years of age may operate or ride upon a bicycle on a public way unless he/she wears protective headgear of a type approved by the commissioner of health and human services.
- A bicyclist shall wear at least one item of reflective outer ware apparel, such as a reflective vest, jacket, or helmet strip, during the period from ½ hour after sunset to ½ hour before sunrise.

## **SHARING THE ROAD WITH PEDESTRIANS**

Vehicle - pedestrian collisions account for nearly 20 percent of all traffic deaths each year. Drivers must use extreme care to avoid colliding with a pedestrian, especially in areas where special hazards exist such as school zones, bus stops, playgrounds and parks. Drivers may use their horn to warn pedestrians, if necessary.

### **Remember, pedestrians have the right of way when:**

- They are in a crosswalk.
- They are using a sidewalk, crossing an alley entrance or driveway.
- They are totally or partially blind, and are crossing the street guided by a dog or carrying a cane white in color or white tipped with red.

### **Pedestrians must:**

- Use crosswalks at intersections.
- Look in both directions before crossing any street.
- When walking along a road where there is no sidewalk. Walk on the left side facing oncoming traffic. Walk on the shoulder of the road, if possible.
- Observe and obey “Walk”, “Don’t Walk” signals.
- At night always wear white or light colored clothing, or carry a light.
- Never walk on interstate or limited access highways.

## **SHARING THE ROAD WITH JOGGERS**

Jogging is not only an enjoyable sport, but many studies claim it is good for your health. However, many joggers are killed each year because they are careless. If you jog, use jogging paths where provided.

If you must jog on public roads, choose wide roads with good shoulders. Jog on the left side facing oncoming traffic. Look ahead and to the sides and listen for vehicles approaching from behind, especially if they are passing other vehicles. You should not have headphones with loud music playing.

Be ready to jump aside if need be. Never jog after dark or in bad weather unless the area is well lit and you are wearing plenty of reflective clothing.

When you are driving, be alert for joggers in unexpected places such as on the top of a hill or in the middle of a curve.

## **SHARING THE ROAD WITH VISUALLY IMPAIRED/BLIND PEDESTRIANS**

When you encounter a pedestrian who is blind or visually impaired, there are legal and practical things to consider. A great majority of persons with visual impairments have remaining vision, which can be quite helpful in travel. A person who is visually impaired may be using a White Cane (the international symbol of blindness) or a harnessed Dog Guide. The White Cane and Dog Guide are tools that assist in locating barriers, potential hazards and in gathering information about their surroundings. Motor Vehicle law requires drivers to come to a complete stop whenever a person who is carrying a White Cane or using a Dog Guide is attempting to cross a roadway. Before continuing drivers must use caution and be aware that they play a very important role in how the person safely negotiates his or her route of travel. The person who is blind listens to hear that the vehicle has stopped moving before proceeding. For most people a 10 foot distance is sufficient to gain the needed information.

While listening to the traffic flow and other auditory information, the person who is visually impaired approaches an intersection and locates the best place to make a safe crossing. Drivers should be aware that the person will begin to cross the street when he or she has determined that a safe crossing can be made. This might not be at the same time that the driver would expect a sighted person to cross.

Remember drivers must come to a complete stop and use extra caution when proceeding or turning right on red. As tempting as it may be, it is not at all helpful to honk or yell at a person who is blind or visually impaired, EVER!

## **CHILDREN AT PLAY**

If you have children, keep an eye on them. Do not let them play or use roller skates, roller blades or skateboards in or near public streets. Teach your children the rights and duties of pedestrians at an early age.

As a driver, be extra careful in residential areas, playgrounds, school zones and at times and places where children are likely to be around.

Always be extra watchful when backing in or out of a driveway for children who may have run behind the vehicle. This is a particular hazard for drivers of delivery vehicles.

## **SHARING THE ROAD WITH SLOW MOVING VEHICLES**

Slow moving vehicles such as farm vehicles or construction equipment are often driven along the highways. Regular traffic must be aware of the slow speed of these vehicles as they approach and must be certain they can pass safely before making the attempt to do so.

The slow moving vehicles are required to display a special triangle sign which means “Slow Moving Vehicle” to warn approaching drivers.

## **SHARING THE ROAD WITH PERSONS RIDING ANIMALS**

Animal riders may use most public roadways, but they may not use limited access highways.

Persons riding animals have the same rights as motor vehicle users and are subject to the same rules.

Drivers approaching any horse shall take every precaution to prevent frightening the horse to insure the safety of the rider. You should slow down, assess the situation, and proceed with caution.

Never sound your horn when approaching or when near a horse as this may frighten the horse and cause a crash.

## **MOTORIST DUTIES WHEN APPROACHING HIGHWAY EMERGENCIES**

When in or approaching an incident involving fire, collision, disaster, or other emergency resulting in partial or complete blockage of a highway, or a location where a police officer has made a traffic stop, every vehicle except for emergency response vehicles, shall:

- Maintain a reduced speed.
- Obey the directions of any authorized person directing traffic and of all applicable emergency signals and traffic control devices.
- Vacate as soon as possible any lane wholly or partially blocked.
- Give a wide berth, without endangering oncoming traffic, to the public safety personnel, any persons in the roadway, and stationary vehicles displaying blue, red or amber emergency or warning lights.

## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. When approaching a location where a police officer has made a traffic stop, every driver shall \_\_\_\_\_ any lane wholly or partially blocked.
2. When it becomes necessary to walk on a roadway, which side should you walk on? \_\_\_\_\_
3. When you walk on the roadway at night you should always \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Persons riding a bicycle must ride on the \_\_\_\_\_ side of the roadway.
5. Bicyclists may not ride more than \_\_\_\_\_ abreast.
6. Besides being smaller what makes a motorcycle harder to see?  
\_\_\_\_\_

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# PART NINETEEN

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## *Commercial Driver License*

On October 26, 1986, Congress passed the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act. This law requires each state to meet the same minimum standards for commercial driver licensing.

The standards require commercial motor vehicle drivers to get a Commercial Driver License (CDL). A “commercial motor vehicle” means a motor vehicle or combination used in commerce to transport passengers or property.

You must have a CDL to operate any of the following commercial motor vehicles:

- A vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) in excess of 26,000 pounds.
- A combination of trailer and towing unit which exceeds 26,000 pounds GVWR with the trailer in excess of 10,000 pounds GVWR.
- A vehicle designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver.
- Any size vehicle which transports hazardous materials (HAZMAT) which requires placarding.

### **Exemptions**

The following vehicles are not considered “commercial motor vehicles” and are therefore exempt from the commercial licensing requirements:


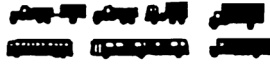

- Farm vehicles owned and operated by a farmer within a 150 mile radius of the farm.
- Emergency vehicles of a fire department.
- Military vehicles operated by military personnel.
- Recreational vehicles.

### **Legal Age**

- You must be at least 18 years of age to get a CDL.
- You must be at least 21 years of age to haul hazardous materials.
- To drive interstate, you must be at least 21 years of age.
- To obtain a commercial driver learner permit, you must be at least 18 years of age and never held a driver license and pass the appropriate written test.

For detailed information of a Commercial Driver License you need a copy of the - Commercial Driver Manual which is available at any licensing location.

## NEW HAMPSHIRE COMMERCIAL DRIVER LICENSE CLASSIFICATIONS

WITH THIS CLASS LICENSE	YOU MAY DRIVE	RELATED ENDORSEMENTS
<b>A</b>	<p>Any combination of vehicles with a GVWR of 26,001 or more pounds provided the GVWR of the vehicle(s) being towed is in excess of 10,000 pounds. (Holders of a Group A license may, with any appropriate endorsements, operate all vehicles within Groups B and C.) Examples include but are not limited to:</p> 	<p>Double/Triple Trailers Tank Vehicles* Tank Vehicles with HAZMAT HAZMAT Passenger Vehicles* (16 or more occupants) School Bus*</p> <p>*Road Test Required</p>
<b>B</b>	<p>Any single vehicle with a GVWR of 26,001 or more pounds, or any such vehicle towing a vehicle not in excess of 10,000 pounds GVWR. (Holders of Group B license may, with any appropriate endorsements, operate all vehicles within Group C.) Examples include but are not limited to:</p> 	<p>Tank Vehicles* Tank Vehicles with HAZMAT* HAZMAT Passenger Vehicles* (16 or more occupants) School Bus*</p> <p>*Road Test Required</p>
<b>C</b>	<p>Any single vehicle less than 26,001 pounds GVWR, or any such vehicle towing a vehicle not in excess of 10,000 pounds GVWR. This group applies to vehicles which are placarded for hazardous materials or designed to transport 16 or more persons, including the operator. Examples include but are not limited to:</p> 	<p>HAZMAT Passenger Vehicles* (16 or more occupants) School Bus*</p> <p>*Road Test Required</p>

### How to apply for a Commercial Driver License

You can get an application for a New Hampshire CDL from any licensing office of the Division of Motor Vehicles or online at [www.nh.gov/dmv](http://www.nh.gov/dmv). This application may be taken to any licensing location.

### SEE CHART ON THIS PAGE TO DETERMINE THE SPECIFIC CLASS OF LICENSE REQUIRED FOR YOUR NEEDS

#### How to select the Endorsement

**H. Hazardous Materials:** This endorsement must appear on your commercial driver license if you drive or intend to legally drive any commercial vehicle which transports hazardous materials and is required to be placarded under State or Federal regulations.

Applicants for this endorsement must pass a separate Hazardous Materials knowledge test to obtain or **RENEW** this endorsement. Please study the appropriate sections of the N.H. Commercial Driver Manual. In addition, all HAZMAT applicants are required to apply for and receive a TSA Fingerprint Clearance (see [www.hazmat.com](http://www.hazmat.com))



**N. Tank Vehicles:** This endorsement must appear on your commercial driver license if you drive or intend to legally drive any commercial vehicle designed to transport any liquid in a tank that is either permanently or temporarily attached to the vehicle or the chassis, or any liquid or liquified gaseous material in a permanent tank that requires placards.

This endorsement **IS NOT** required for portable tanks having a rated capacity under 1,000 gallons.

Applicants must pass a separate Tank Vehicle knowledge test and road skills test in order to obtain this endorsement. Please study the appropriate sections of the N.H. Commercial Driver Manual.

**P. Passenger Vehicles:** This endorsement must appear on your commercial driver license if you drive or intend to drive any commercial vehicle designed to transport 16 or more passengers including the driver.

Applicants for this endorsement must pass a separate Passenger Vehicle knowledge test **AND** a skills test in a passenger type vehicle representative of the group class (SIZE) license they wish to hold. Please study the applicable section of the N.H. Commercial Driver Manual.

**T. Double / Triple Trailers:** This endorsement must appear on your commercial driver license if you drive or intend to legally haul double or triple trailers.

Applicants for this endorsement must pass a separate Double / Triple Trailer knowledge test. Please study the applicable sections of the N.H. Commercial Driver Manual.

**S.** This endorsement must appear on your commercial driver license if you intend to drive a school bus designed to transport 16 or more persons, including the driver.

**NOTE: It is illegal to operate triple trailers in New Hampshire. This endorsement will, however, allow you to haul a triple trailer in those states which allow such vehicles.**

**NOTE: AN OPERATOR'S LICENSE WILL ALLOW YOU TO DRIVE A VEHICLE WITH A GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT OF UP TO AND INCLUDING 26,000 POUNDS IF YOU DO NOT TOW A TRAILER WITH A GROSS WEIGHT OF OVER 10,000 POUNDS, TRANSPORT HAZARDOUS MATERIALS OR DRIVE A BUS DESIGNED TO TRANSPORT 16 OR MORE PASSENGERS INCLUDING THE DRIVER.**

## **TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE**

1. What is a CDL license? \_\_\_\_\_

## **ORGAN AND TISSUE DONOR PROGRAM**

You may designate your consent to become an organ and tissue donor at any time through the Division of Motor Vehicles. You may register for the New Hampshire Donor Registry when updating your driver license and/or non driver identification at any Division of Motor Vehicle licensing location. The information of those individuals opting to participate in the New Hampshire Donor Registry is released to federally-designated organ procurement organizations. The Division of Motor Vehicles is currently working with the New England Organ Bank.

By registering with the New Hampshire Donor Registry, you indicate your willingness to help the thousands of Americans awaiting life-saving and life-enhancing organ and tissue transplants. Advances in medical science make it possible to replace a failing human organ such as kidneys, heart, liver and lungs or to provide heart valves, skin or tendon to those in need.

You may choose to revoke or change your designation for the New Hampshire Donor Registry at any time when updating your driver or non driver identification through the Division of Motor Vehicles. Additional information on the New England Organ Bank and/or the New Hampshire Donor Registry is available through the Division of Motor Vehicles.

## **MOTOR VEHICLE LICENSING LOCATIONS**

**FOR QUESTIONS REGARDING DMV LOCATIONS AND  
HOURS OF OPERATION**

**PLEASE GO TO: [www.nh.gov/dmv](http://www.nh.gov/dmv)**

**OR CALL  
603-227-4000**

**TRAFFIC SIGNALS**



STOP

CLEARANCE

GO



STOP

CLEARANCE

GO



AHEAD ONLY

LEFT ONLY

RIGHT ONLY

**PEDESTRIAN SIGNALS**



"ONE PERSON'S RIGHT TO DRIVE IS NOT MORE IMPORTANT THAN ANOTHER PERSON'S RIGHT TO LIVE."

**LIMITED-ACCESS  
INTERSTATE  
FREEWAY**



**SLOW MOVING  
VEHICLES**



**RAILROAD  
CROSSING**



## HIGHWAY SIGN IDENTITY COLORS

Colors help you to discriminate between signs at a glance.

**STOP OR  
PROHIBITION**

**REGULATION**

**STOP OR  
PROHIBITION**



**REGULATION**



**DIRECTION OR GUIDANCE**



**CONSTRUCTION WARNING**



**MOTORIST SERVICES**

GAS-FOOD  
LODGING  
NEXT RIGHT



CAMPING  
→



HOSPITAL  
→

**RECREATION AND SCENIC GUIDANCE**

Entering  
WHITE  
MOUNTAIN  
NATIONAL  
FOREST

CAMPING



NO  
PASSING  
ZONE

GENERAL  
WARNING



SIGNAL  
AHEAD



TWO WAY  
TRAFFIC



LOW  
CLEARANCE



DIVIDED  
HIGHWAY



DIVIDED  
HIGHWAY  
ENDS



FARM  
MACHINERY



SLIPPERY  
WHEN WET



MERGE



DEER  
XING



HILL

