

YOU

are  
at risk

*A special message to drivers  
in the probation and graduated  
licensing programs.*

This booklet is for motorists having problems driving safely. Please read this material. There is a short traffic safety quiz on the last page of this brochure to test your knowledge.

This is very important for drivers with a graduated license or who are on probation. These programs work together to reduce your risk of unsafe driving. You must be a safe driver before you can advance in either program.

Receiving this booklet in the mail means unsafe driving events have been posted to your record. If you are a probationary driver, it may result in probation being extended. If you have a graduated license, your current license may be extended. Should this occur, you will be notified by the Secretary of State. That notice will advise you when probation will end or when you can advance to the next licensing level.

Drivers at Level 1 must drive 90 consecutive days without a driving violation, license suspension or crash (showing a hazardous action) posted to your record before obtaining a Level 2 license. To obtain a Level 3 license, these requirements must be met for 12 consecutive months at Level 1 and/or Level 2.

Remember: You must show an ability to drive safely at all times. More important, your record must show that you **are** driving safely!

## **YOUR DRIVING RISKS**

You are facing serious risks:

- **Crashes**
- **Higher Insurance Premiums**
- **Possible Driver License Suspension**

If you think everyone gets traffic tickets or is involved in a traffic crash, think again.

- **Three out of 4 Michigan driver records show no points within a two-year period.\***
- **Nine out of 10 Michigan driver records show no traffic crashes within a two-year period.\***

\*Michigan Driver File (Prg/DR/9090)

The traffic tickets and/or crashes now posted to your record show that you are not driving as safely as most Michigan drivers. This places you at higher risk for future crashes and violations.

We know you can drive much safer. Lowering your risk now might prevent you from getting another ticket, becoming involved in a traffic crash and help you avoid higher insurance rates.

### ***LOWER YOUR RISK***

Think about your last ticket.

Did you really have to

...drive that fast?

...roll through the "STOP" sign?

...make an illegal turn?

You probably could have driven more safely and avoided getting a ticket.

You need to lower your risk by bringing it down to the level of most other drivers. You can lower your risk of suspension by avoiding traffic tickets. You can lower your risk of a crash or ticket by controlling the way you drive.

Most crashes happen because people drive different speeds, in different directions and have different plans. If everyone drove the same speed and direction, you could forget about rear-

end and head-on collisions and side crashes. It would be ideal driving!

In reality, things aren't that simple. Some people drive too fast, some drive too slow, and most drivers are somewhere in between.

Crash risks are everywhere.

You can control them by concentrating on the rules of safe driving summarized in this booklet.

### ***THE TROUBLE WITH SPEED***

Speed is a factor contributing to more than half of all crashes. This is partly because when you speed, you frequently pass and change lanes.

The more you speed, the higher your risk of having a crash.

Maybe you think speeding is OK, as long as no one is close by. True, you won't have to pass or tailgate

However, engineers design roads with speed limits in mind. Whether you can maneuver sharp curves, get good traction on the road surface, read road signs and benefit from guardrails depends on obeying the speed limit.

When reporting a crash, reporters or broadcasters often say the driver "**lost control**" of the vehicle.

This usually means the driver lost control of the speed. If you adjust your speed to traffic and road conditions, you will greatly reduce your chances of losing control and crashing.

Finally, your chances of surviving a crash are much better if you are driving slower. Your chances of dying in a crash double when you increase your speed from 55 mph to 65 mph.

### ***Speed and Tickets***

Almost two-thirds of all tickets are speed related. Every year Michigan drivers receive about 600,000 speeding convictions.

Police put a high priority on ticketing speed-

ers because they pose such a serious crash risk to themselves and others.

With radar, laser speed detectors, and other new technology, your chances of getting a ticket are high.

Speeding tickets cost money and will likely increase your insurance rates. And remember: *If you continue to get tickets or are involved in crashes, your license may be suspended.*










### ***Saving Time?***

Some people think speeding saves time. If you save time, it is such a few seconds that the risk of getting a ticket, paying fines and losing your license is surely not worth it!

If you broke the law and drove a constant 60 mph in a 55-mph zone for one hour, you would save about five minutes. But chances are, you won't save that much time.

You would keep slowing down for other cars and then speeding up to get around them. You might actually "save" only two to three minutes when the weather is good.

### **TRAVEL TIMES AT DIFFERENT SPEEDS**

<b>SPEED</b>	<b>DISTANCE</b>		
	<b>5 miles</b>	<b>10 miles</b>	<b>20 miles</b>
<b>65 mph</b>	 4 1/2 min	 9 min	 18 min
<b>60 mph</b>	 5 min	 10 min	 20 min
<b>55 mph</b>	 5 1/2 min	 11 min	 22 min

These travel times are based on constant driving speeds, something that is rarely possible. Even at constant speeds, the "savings" are small—and the risks are large.

And you have exposed yourself to getting a ticket, losing control of the vehicle and having a crash.

Driving for a full hour is not too common anyway. Three of every five trips are less than five miles. It is hard to cut even a few seconds off these short trips!

Are a few seconds worth the risk of a crash, fine or suspension?

### ***Controlling Speed***

The best way to control risks is controlling your speed and adjusting to roadway conditions.

**Driving too fast for conditions** does not just happen in bad weather. You can be driving too fast for conditions on the clearest day of the year, if you are driving faster than the cars around you.

By blending with the traffic flow—but not exceeding the speed limit—you avoid speeding tickets and lower your risk of a crash and license suspension.

## LOOKING FOR TROUBLE

When you drive, you should constantly look for problems ahead, to the sides and behind. You can deal with problems better when you see them early.

You have probably heard someone say, "I didn't even see the car until it was on top of me." If a car is that close, you should be able to see it unless you are speeding or not looking.

### ***LOOK WELL AHEAD***

Too many drivers fix their eyes on the vehicle directly in front of them. They may have an unpleasant surprise when the driver ahead slams on the brakes "without warning!"

As a matter of fact, drivers seldom brake without a good reason. If you look far enough ahead, you can spot the reason about the same time the driver ahead of you sees it.

By looking well ahead of your travel path, you will have time to identify and prepare for problems.

Of course, if you are speeding, you will have less time to see, plan and react.

When engineers design a road, they consider how far ahead you will need to see if you are driving the speed limit.

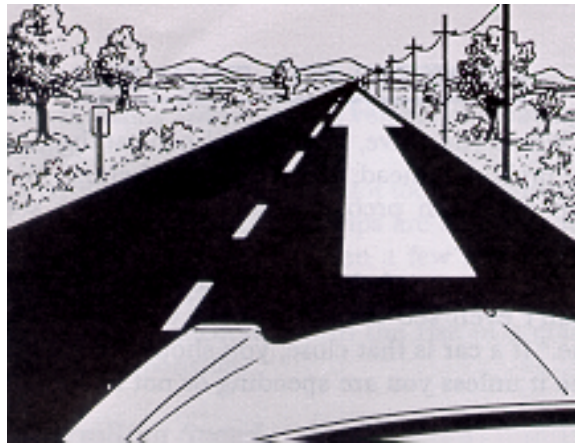
For example, "**NO PASSING**" signs and yellow stripes warn you when you cannot see far enough ahead to pass.

If you are speeding, these warnings will be too late and the result could be disastrous.

### ***Look This Far Ahead***

Scan the road and roadside as far as you possibly can. At the very least, look ahead about 15 seconds.

On a highway, in 15 seconds you will cover about a *quarter of a mile*. If you look ahead a



**15 SECONDS - 1/4 MILE**



**15 SECONDS - 1 BLOCK**

quarter-mile, you will have 15 seconds to see, plan and react to problems.

On city streets at low speeds (25-35 mph), in 15 seconds you will drive *one* block. Look one block ahead.

If you are speeding, you will have trouble looking far enough ahead to react to a problem.



## ***LOOKING FOR TROUBLE FROM THE SIDES***

Drivers who look only straight ahead leave themselves open to trouble from the side.

More than half of all two-car crashes occur at intersections. About 32 percent of *fatal* crashes happen at intersections.

One reason speed limits on city streets are low is because of the many intersections, which increase the risk of collisions. The lower speed limits set by traffic engineers give drivers time to see, plan and react to danger coming from the sides.

At an intersection, vehicles coming from the side will be fairly close before you can spot them and their drivers can see you. If you are speeding, you may not have enough space and time to react.

By looking to the side, you may see vehicles coming at you, pedestrians crossing the street, children playing and other risks.

In high-speed areas, there is usually considerable open space around intersections to make it easier for you to spot problems coming from the side.

Speeding also causes tunnel vision, which keeps you from focusing on trouble-spots.

### ***Avoiding Trouble from the Side***

Always look to the sides *before* you come to an intersection. If you do not have a clear view, slow down so that you can spot problems and react.

Whenever you cannot see to the side, reduce your speed drastically or perhaps stop completely. Detecting something moving and judging its speed, is easier when you are standing still.

Be sure to turn your head and get a good look; your vehicle's window post is wide enough to hide a pedestrian or a car.

## ***LOOKING FOR TROUBLE FROM BEHIND***

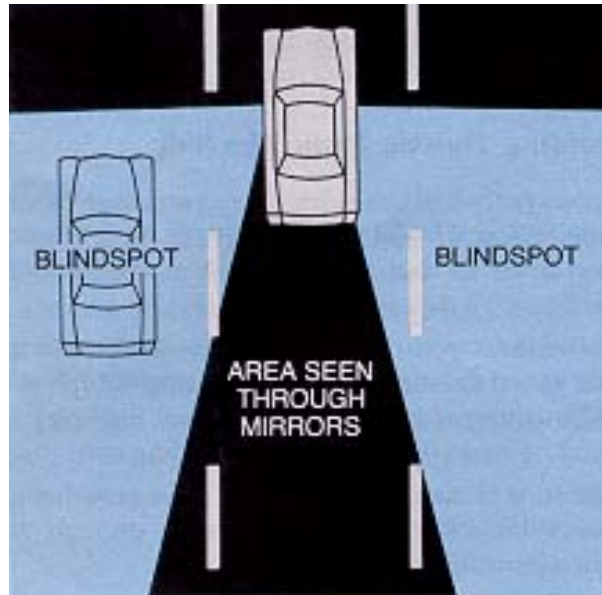
Trouble often sneaks up from behind, in the form of tailgaters, speeders, or vehicles in your blind spots.

Unfortunately, rearview and side mirrors do not give you the whole picture to the rear. Blind spots are big enough to hide a car.

Some drivers use special convex mirrors to minimize blind spots that cannot be completely eliminated. But curved mirrors distort the roadway and make things seem farther away than they really are.

### ***Protect Yourself from Back Troubles***

The best advice to avoid trouble behind you is to check your mirrors often.



Before turning, moving to a new lane or otherwise changing directions, always turn your head and check over your shoulder to make sure the blind spot is clear. Do not rely on your mirrors.

## AVOIDING TROUBLE

To avoid crashes and allow room to maneuver, keep open space—a buffer zone—around your car at all times. It gives you room to react to problems.

### ***SPEED AND SPACE AHEAD***

Adjusting your travel speed and keeping a buffer zone in front of and behind your vehicle are perhaps the three most important safe driving tips.

Normally, two seconds of following distance between your vehicle and the next one is an adequate buffer zone. But a two-second space is not enough in every situation.

If you are behind a truck, bus or other vehicle you cannot see around, allow a three- to four-second following distance. You should still look ahead *15 seconds* as previously discussed, to see and anticipate problems.

When conditions are slippery or foggy, or both, you will also need at least three or four seconds of space between you and nearby vehicles.

Another way to be safe is driving a speed that allows you to stop within the distance you can see. Experienced drivers automatically do this in poor conditions, such as in fog or a snow-storm.

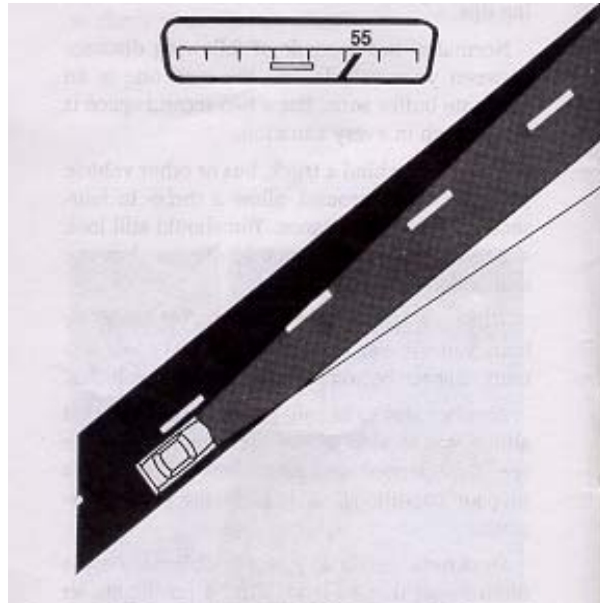
**Darkness** can also cause problems. People often forget that their high-beam headlights let them see *clearly* only about 250 feet ahead—the same distance it takes to stop when driving 50 mph.

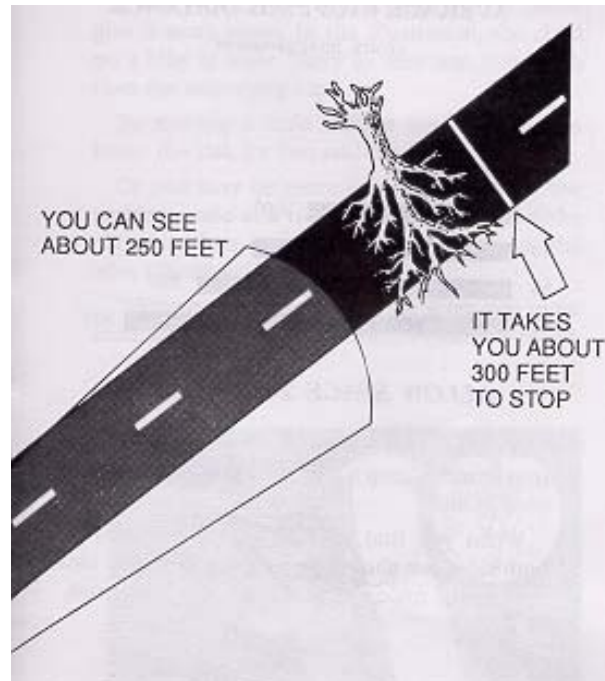
If you were driving 55 or 60 mph and your high-beams suddenly revealed a fallen tree, you

could not stop before reaching it.

With low-beam headlights, you have even less time to react. Low beams let you see only about 175 feet ahead.

Lower your speed to account for poor visibility caused by darkness.





### ***Allow Enough Stopping Distance in Front of Your Vehicle***

Stopping distance is how far you travel from the time you decide to stop to the time your car actually stops. It is a tricky calculation, but you should be familiar with the idea.

If you are driving 40 mph, it would take you four times more distance to stop than if you were driving 20 mph. At 60 mph, you need four times as much distance to stop as a driver going 30 mph.

Figuring a safe stopping distance is very difficult when road conditions are poor. On slippery roads, it is sometimes hard to stop at all! But you certainly need more distance and time to stop, so slow down.

## AVERAGE STOPPING DISTANCE

on dry, level pavement

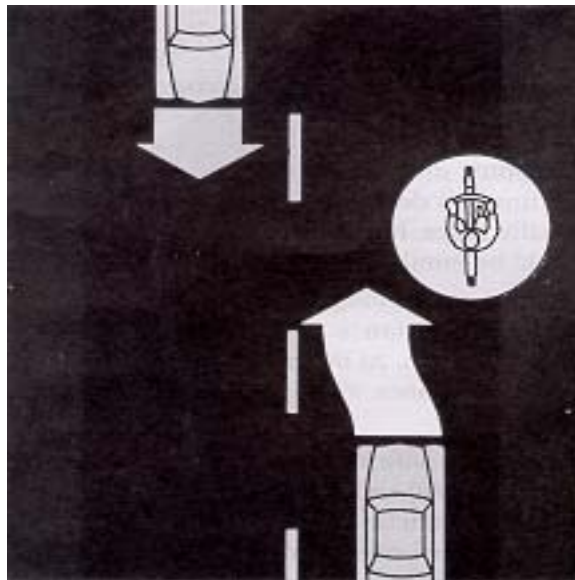
mph

20	50'
30	90'
40	200'
50	250'
55	300'
60	360'

### *ALLOW SPACE TO THE SIDE*

Because trouble from the side is likely, it is important to keep a buffer zone at either side of your vehicle.

When you find yourself facing a problem on both sides (*see illustration below*), it is a good idea to steer the middle course and control your risk.

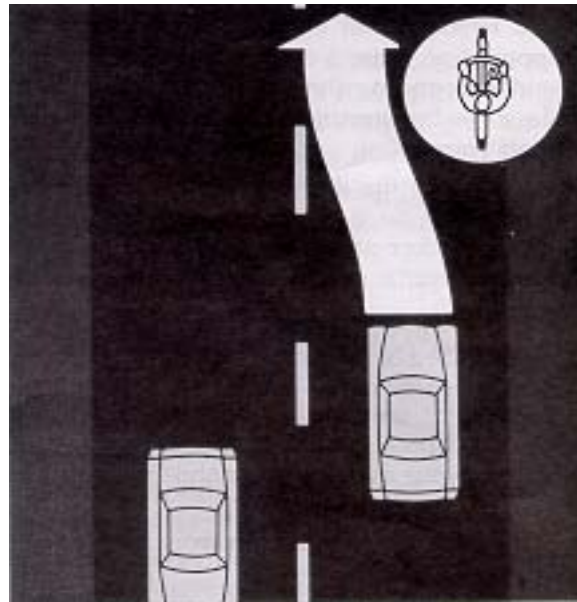


If one problem is a higher risk than the other, give it more room. In the illustration, the child on a bike is more likely to veer into your path than the oncoming car.

By shifting a little toward the car, you can lower the risk for you and the bicyclist.

Or you may be more comfortable taking the problem one at a time: Slow down and let the car pass; then cross the centerline to pass the bike. (*Illustration below*)

Taking one problem at a time gives you more room and lowers the risk for everyone involved.



## ***KEEPING SPACE TO THE REAR***

Keeping open space behind you is one of the hardest things to do when driving.

If you pick up a tailgater, speeding up to put distance between the two of you almost never works. Usually, the tailgater keeps tailgating.

Then you have two problems: Someone following too closely, and you are both going too fast. Even worse, you might tailgate the car ahead of you.

With a tailgater, the best tactic is to leave plenty of space in front of you. Be sure you are scanning the road at least 15 seconds ahead.

Slow down gradually, if necessary, to get more space ahead of you. Then if something happens, at least you have enough room to avoid rear-ending the car in front. You may be able to swing around it to avoid getting rear-ended yourself.

Controlling the driver behind you is difficult, but you can do it. Reduce your crash risks by looking farther ahead in traffic and by braking *earlier* for traffic situations.

## ***STAY IN YOUR "OWN" SPACE***

Whenever you invade someone else's buffer zone safe space (tailgating is one way), you cut down on your own buffer, increasing your crash risk.

Tailgating eliminates your front buffer and the leading driver's rear buffer.

Do not drive in someone's blind spot where you cannot be seen. If that driver changes lanes, you are at high risk of being struck. Also, when you drive in someone's blind spot, you cannot see to the side clearly.

Always yield the right-of-way when required. You could be ticketed if you do anything to make the other driver slow down or change position on the road to avoid you.



To reduce the crash risk when you yield, allow a safety space (buffer) around the other vehicle.

**Signaling** is another way to protect your space. Use signals any time you plan to turn or change lanes. Signals alert other drivers to a change in your direction and give them time to make room for you.

Signal early so others have time to read your message and react. Even if you do not see anyone nearby, you should signal. The driver you do not see is the one who can give you the most trouble.

## **NEVER DRINK AND DRIVE**

Even experienced drivers with no tickets are more likely to have a crash if they are not in condition to drive. Alcohol, fatigue and emotions affect your driving more than you realize.

*Separating drinking from driving* is one of the surest ways to control crash and violation risks and stay “in shape” to drive.

## ***ALCOHOL'S EFFECT***

Today, everyone knows drinking and driving is trouble. Alcohol is a reported factor in about 45 percent of fatal traffic crashes.

Some drivers still think they can drink and handle the risks of driving. They are wrong!

Nationally, *more than 22,000 people are killed each year* by drivers who drank alcohol and thought they could handle it.

People often think if they “just had a few beers” they have not consumed much alcohol. A 12-ounce beer, a 5-ounce glass of wine and a 1 ½-ounce shot of whiskey all contain the same, significant amount of alcohol.

If you drink alcohol, you are an unfit driver long before you know it.

Even one or two drinks affect your ability to judge distance, speed and motion. By the time you feel even a little tipsy, your judgment has already been affected.

With two or three more drinks, a person's vision starts to go. The eyes have difficulty adjusting to glare and darkness, and depth perception and side vision are quite limited.

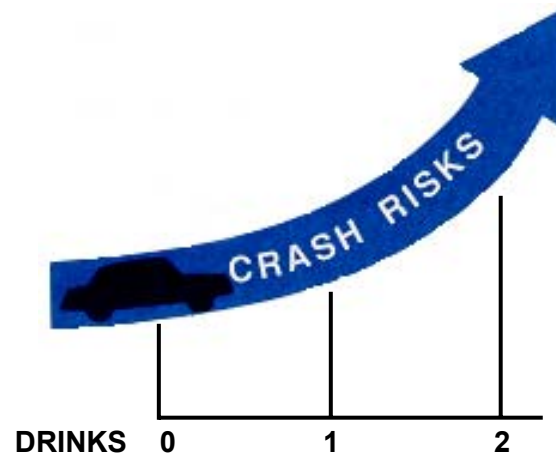
After consuming more than two or three drinks, a driver has a very difficult time reacting safely to any problem he or she can detect. Even the easiest driving situations will be too much.

### ***BAC and Your Condition***

Since judgment is quickly affected by alcohol and other drugs, you cannot evaluate what condition you are in after even one drink. The police will know your condition exactly, after measuring your blood alcohol concentration (BAC), the percentage of alcohol in your blood.

A driver's risk of having a crash increases along with BAC.

A driver with a 0.06 percent BAC (one to three drinks) is twice as likely *to have a crash* as a driver who drank no alcohol. At 0.10 percent, the legal limit of operating under the influence, the risks are *six times (600 percent) greater!*



An inexperienced driver's crash risk is even higher. With just 0.03 percent BAC, drivers under the age of 20 are about *three times* more **likely to have a crash** than if they had nothing to drink. One or two drinks will put a 200-pound person at 0.03 percent BAC.

Drinking before driving seriously impairs your ability to **understand** traffic situations. You have reduced your ability to **plan** a safe course of action, and impaired your vehicle **control** skills.

### ***BAC and Legal Limits***

Under Michigan law, a driver is "impaired" if BAC is more than 0.07 percent and less than 0.10 percent. A driver is "under the influence" *regardless of the BAC* if there is other evidence that your driving was affected by alcohol. Detailed listing of penalties may be found on the table at the end of this brochure.

### ***If You are Under Age 21***

It is illegal to drink alcohol or have open containers of alcohol in your possession. You can be arrested for drinking and driving if your BAC level is more than 0.02 percent.

Refusing a preliminary breath test will net you two points on your driving record.

The chart on the following page provides the criminal and licensing penalties for under age 21 drivers convicted of BAC of 0.02 commonly known as "Zero Tolerance."

Drinking drivers, no matter what age they are, increase their risk of becoming involved in a crash and, injury to themselves or others as a result. The best way to avoid having a crash is simply not to drink or use drugs when you are driving.

If you get two drinking and driving convictions, your license will be revoked for a minimum of one year.

**ZERO TOLERANCE  
UNDER 21 YEARS OF AGE  
BAC OF .02 PERCENT**

- **First Conviction:**  
Up to \$250 fines and/or  
Up to 45 days community service  
License restriction 30 days  
Lose photo license 30 days  
4 points added to record
  
- **Second Conviction:**  
Up to \$500 fine and/or  
Up to 60 days community service  
Up to 93 days in jail  
License suspension 90 days  
4 points added to record

**SAFETY BELTS**

Michigan law allows police officer to stop and ticket drivers based only on failure to be properly restrained. Be responsible, buckle up every time you get into your vehicle and make sure your passengers do the same. It's the law.

Drivers exempt from using a safety belt because of a medical condition must carry a doctor's statement.

## REVIEW

This quick review summarizes how you can avoid getting a ticket and having a traffic crash.

- **Crashes.**

Last year, more than 102,000 young Michigan drivers were involved in car crashes. Your driving record indicates you remain at risk of having a crash, possibly in the near future.

- **Tickets.**

Both traffic tickets and crashes indicate you are not driving as safely as you should be. This places you at higher risk for more tickets and possible traffic crashes.

- **Suspension.**

Additional traffic tickets or crashes could mean the end of your driving days for a while if your license is suspended.

The Secretary of State suspends nearly *950 licenses every week*, to keep unsafe drivers off the road.

*Drive in a manner that reduces your risk of a crash, ticket or suspension of your license.*

**CRIMINAL AND LICENSING  
PENALTIES FOR OUIL, QUID, UBAL,  
OWI, CHILD ENDANGERMENT  
AND .04 CDL**

**First Offense:**

**OUIL/QUID/UBAC**

- \$100 to \$500 fine and/or
- Up to 93 days jail and/or
- Up to 45 days community service
- Driver license suspension of 6 months with no restrictions for the first 30 days
- 6 points on driving record

**OWI**

- Up to \$300 fine and/or
- Up to 93 days jail and/or
- Up to 45 days community service
- Restricted license for 90 days
- 4 points on driving record

**OUI/OWI CAUSING INJURY**

(Felony)

- \$1,000 to \$5,000 fine and/or
- Prison up to 5 years
- Driver license revocation of 1 year
- Plate confiscation
- Vehicle immobilization up to 180 days
- Possible vehicle forfeiture

**OUI/OWI CAUSING DEATH**

(Felony)

- \$2,500 to \$10,000 fine and/or
- Prison up to 15 years
- Driver license revocation for a minimum of 1 year
- Plate confiscation
- Vehicle immobilization up to 180 days
- Possible vehicle forfeiture

**CHILD ENDANGERMENT**

- \$200 to \$1,000 fine and
- 5 days to 1 year jail and/or
- 30 to 90 days community service
- 3 month license suspension followed by 3 months of restrictions
- Possible vehicle immobilization up to 180 days
- Possible vehicle forfeiture

#### **.04 CDL**

- Up to \$300 fine and/or
- Up to 93 days jail
- 1 year suspension of CDL license
- Operator license restricted 90 days
- Hazardous materials license suspended 3 years
- Possible vehicle immobilization up to 180 days

#### **Second Offense:**

##### **OUIL/OUID/UBAC**

- \$200 to \$1,000 fine and
- 5 days to 1 year jail and/or
- 30 to 90 days community service
- Driver license revocation for a minimum of 1 year
- Plate confiscation required
- 90 to 180 days vehicle immobilization
- Possible vehicle forfeiture
- 6 points on driving record

##### **OWI**

- \$200 to \$1,000 fine and
- 5 days to 1 year jail and/or
- 30 to 90 days community service
- Driver license revocation for a minimum of 1 year
- Plate confiscation required
- 90 to 180 days vehicle immobilization or
- Vehicle forfeiture
- 4 points on driving record

##### **OUIL/OWI CAUSING INJURY**

(Felony)

- \$1,000 to \$5,000 fine and/or
- Prison up to 5 years
- Driver license revocation/denial for a minimum of 5 years
- Plate confiscation
- 90 to 180 days vehicle immobilization or
- Vehicle forfeiture

##### **OUIL/OWI CAUSING DEATH**

(Felony)

- \$2,500 to \$10,000 fine and/or
- Prison up to 15 years
- Driver license revocation/denial for a minimum of 5 years
- Plate confiscation
- 90 to 180 days vehicle immobilization or
- Vehicle forfeiture

## **CHILD ENDANGERMENT**

(Felony)

- \$500 to \$5,000 fine and
- 1 to 5 years prison or
- Probation with 30 days to 1 year jail and
- 60 to 180 days community service
- Driver license revocation/denial for a minimum of 1 year
- Plate confiscation
- 90 to 180 days vehicle immobilization or
- Vehicle forfeiture

## **.04 CDL**

- Up to \$1,000 fine and/or
- Up to 1 year prison
- 10 year revocation of CDL license
- 1 year revocation/denial of operators license
- Plate confiscation
- 90 to 180 days vehicle immobilization

## **Third Offense:**

Any Combination Within 10 years  
(Felony)

## **OUIL/OUID/UBAC**

- \$500 to \$5,000 fine and
- 1 to 5 years in prison or
- Probation with 30 days to 1 year in jail and
- 60 to 180 days community service
- Driver license revocation for a minimum of 5 years
- Plate confiscation
- 1 to 3 years vehicle immobilization or
- Vehicle forfeiture
- Registration denial
- 6 points on driving record

## **OWL**

- \$500 to \$5,000 fine and
- 1 to 5 years in prison or
- Probation with 30 days to 1 year in jail and
- 60 to 180 days community service
- Driver license revocation for a minimum of 5 years
- Plate confiscation
- 1 to 3 years vehicle immobilization or
- Vehicle forfeiture
- Registration denial
- 4 points on driving record



### **OUIL/OWI CAUSING INJURY**

(Felony)

- \$1,000 to \$5,000 fine and/or
- Prison up to 5 years
- Driver license revocation/denial for a minimum of 5 years
- Plate confiscation
- 1 to 3 years vehicle immobilization or
- Vehicle forfeiture
- Registration denial

### **OUIL/OWI CAUSING DEATH**

(Felony)

- \$2500 to \$10,000 fine and/or
- Prison up to 15 years
- Driver license revocation/denial for a minimum of 5 years
- Plate confiscation
- 1 to 3 years vehicle immobilization or
- Vehicle forfeiture
- Registration denial

### **.04 CDL (Felony)**

- \$500 to \$5,000 fine and
- 1 to 5 years prison or
- Probation with 30 days to 1 year jail and
- 60 to 180 days community service
- Revocation of CDL license for life
- Operator's license revocation/denial for a minimum of 5 years
- Plate confiscation
- 1 to 3 years vehicle immobilization
- Registration denial

OUIL -- Operating under the influence of liquor

OUID -- Operating under the influence of drugs

UBAC -- Unlawful bodily alcohol content

OWI -- Operating while impaired

If you have questions about your driver license or driving record, you may contact the nearest Secretary of State branch office.

If you would prefer to write, address your questions to:

Michigan Department of State  
Driver Assessment Unit  
P.O. Box 30196  
Lansing, MI 48909-7696

**Access for Individuals with Disabilities:**

The Secretary of State complies with the standards established by the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you need accommodations, please telephone: 1-888-SOS-MICH (1-888-767-6424) or TTY (517) 322-1477.