

DRIVE SAFELY IN MICHIGAN

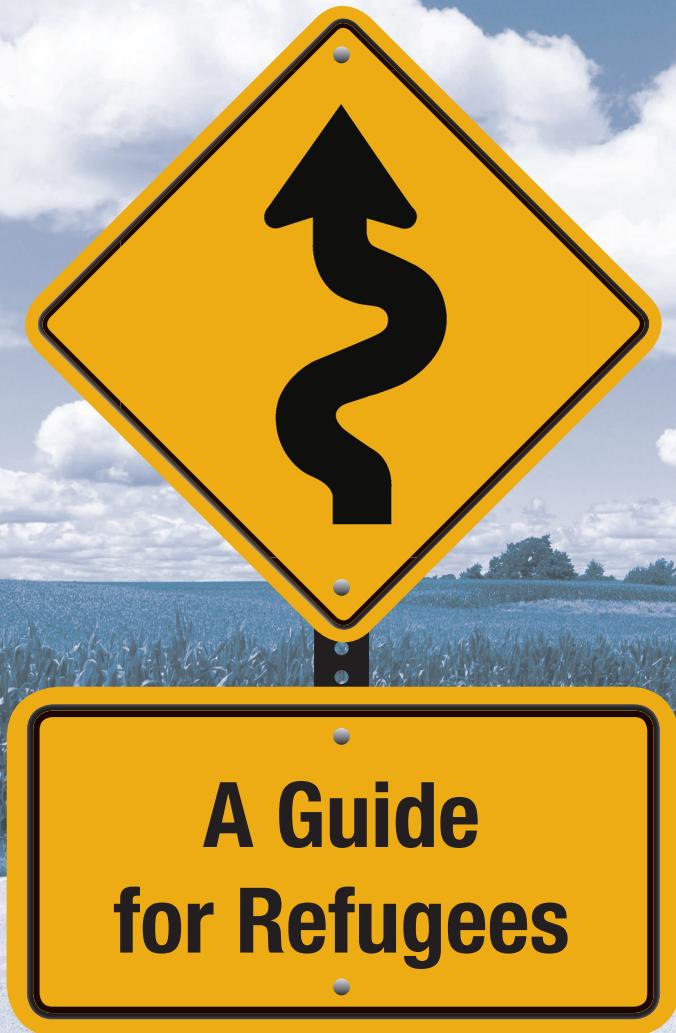


Table of Contents

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Introduction | 4 |
|--------------------|---|

Passenger Safety

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Seat Belts | 6 |
| Children in Vehicles | 6 |
| Heatstroke | 7 |
| Bed of the Truck | 7 |

Things that Impair Driving Ability

| | |
|--------------------------|----|
| Mobile Phone Use | 9 |
| Distracted Driving | 9 |
| Minors Drinking | 9 |
| Impaired Driving | 10 |

Rules of the Road

| | |
|------------------------------|----|
| “Move Over” Law | 12 |
| School Buses | 12 |
| Construction Zones | 13 |
| Lanes of Travel | 13 |
| Driving Violations | 14 |
| Traffic Violation Bond | 14 |
| Getting Pulled Over | 15 |

Administrative Information

| | |
|--|----|
| Vehicle Registration and Insurance | 17 |
| Michigan Driver’s License | 18 |
| Foreign Driver’s License | 19 |

This reference guide provides refugees with information about Michigan traffic laws and safe driving practices. The guide does not include every Michigan traffic law. It is meant as a resource for the refugee community to provide greater understanding and increase safety on the roads.

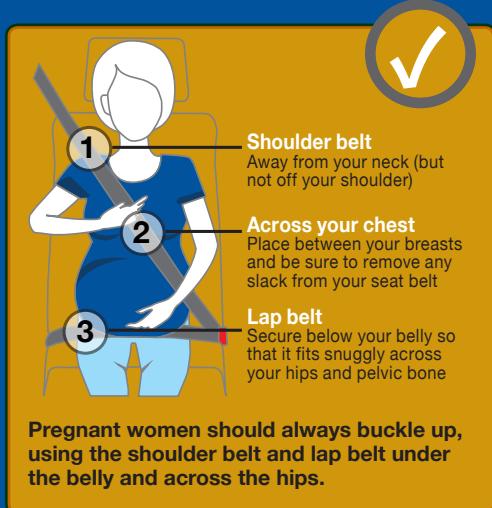


Passenger Safety

Seat Belts



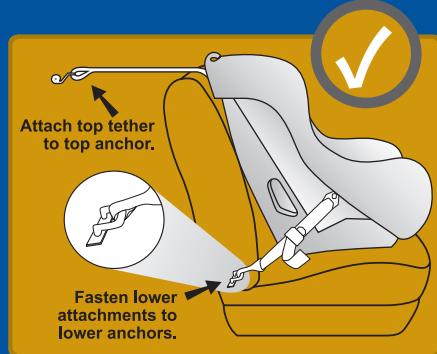
- Michigan law requires drivers, front seat passengers, and all rear seat passengers age 15 and younger to wear seat belts.
- Police may pull over a vehicle if the driver or front seat passengers are not using seat belts.
- Seat belts secure you in the vehicle, which reduces the risk of serious injury or death in a crash.
 - » Air bags are designed to work with seat belts.



Children in Vehicles



- Michigan law requires children to be restrained in a car seat or booster seat until at least age 8 or 4'9" (144.78 cm) tall.
 - » Children do not fit in seat belts and need car seats to protect them.
 - » Babies should be in a rear-facing car seat until at least age 2 and then use a car seat with a harness until approximately age 5, at which time a booster seat is needed.
- Nursing a baby while the vehicle is moving is prohibited.
- When obtaining a car seat, do not use it if:
 - » The seat has been involved in a crash previously.
 - » The seat is past the manufacturer's expiration date.
 - » The history of the seat is unknown to you (if purchased at a garage sale or resale store).



Heatstroke



- Never leave anyone, especially a child, elderly person, or pet, alone in a vehicle.
 - » A hot vehicle can cause severe injury or death, and could result in arrest or jail time for the driver.
- In 10 minutes, a vehicle's temperature can rise more than 20°F (11°C).
- Even in 60°F (15.5°C) weather, the temperature inside the vehicle can reach 110°F (43.3°C).

Bed of the Truck



- Even at low speeds, riding in the bed of a truck, covered or uncovered, is dangerous.
 - » There's nothing to keep you safe in the event of a crash.
 - » A bump or curve can cause riders to be thrown from the truck bed.
- Persons under age 18 may not ride in the open bed of a truck at a speed greater than 15 miles per hour (24 kilometers per hour) on a public roadway.
 - » This does not apply to a vehicle controlled or operated by an employer or employee of a farm operation, construction business, or similar enterprise during the course of work activities.

Things that Impair Driving Ability

Mobile Phone Use



- Michigan law prohibits reading, manually typing, or sending a text message while driving.
 - » Drivers may make mobile phone calls and use GPS units affixed to the vehicle, but this distracting behavior should be avoided, if possible.
 - » Individual cities, townships, and counties may enact mobile phone bans in their jurisdiction. These will be posted when entering the area.
- The fine for a first offense of texting while driving is at least \$100.

Distracted Driving



- Drivers who become distracted and commit a traffic violation can receive a ticket.
- Examples of distracted driving can include:
 - » Using a cell phone or texting.
 - » Eating and drinking.
 - » Grooming.
 - » Reading, including maps.
 - » Using a navigation system.
 - » Watching a video.
 - » Changing the radio station, CD, or MP3 player.

Minors Drinking



- It is illegal for persons under age 21 to have alcohol in their possession.
 - » Persons under age 21 may not purchase or consume alcohol.
- It is illegal to purchase or provide alcohol to persons under age 21.
 - » Adults are legally responsible if a person under age 21 consumes alcohol in their home.
- It is illegal for persons under age 21 to operate a vehicle while impaired by alcohol at any level.
- When driving or riding in a vehicle, do not possess or transport alcohol in an open or uncapped container.

Impaired Driving



- Do not operate a vehicle under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or any other intoxicating substance that impairs your ability to drive.
 - » A driver is considered impaired with a blood alcohol content of .08 or higher.
 - » A driver can be arrested at any blood alcohol content level if police believe he/she is driving while impaired.
 - » Refusal to take a chemical test will result in a suspended license.
- Penalties are higher if convicted with a blood alcohol content of .17 or higher.
- A conviction for operating while intoxicated can result in:
 - » A suspended license.
 - » Installation of an ignition interlock device.
 - » Immobilization of the vehicle.
 - » Confiscation of license plates.
 - » Denial of automobile registration.
- Violators can also face points on a driver's license, heavy fines, jail time, and mandatory alcohol use programs. The penalties are more severe for drivers with previous convictions, even if they are from another state or country.
- When driving or riding in a vehicle, do not possess or transport alcohol in an open or uncapped container.



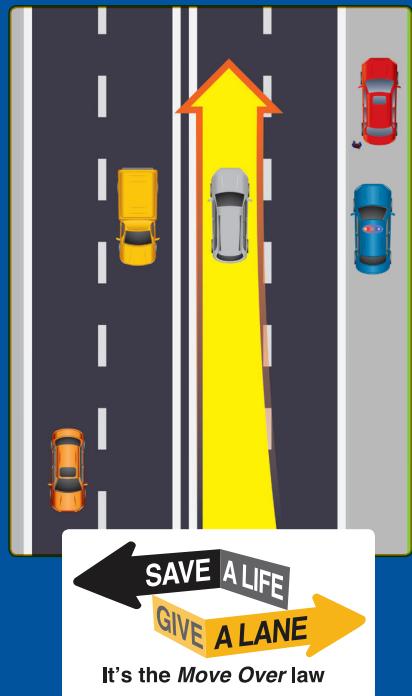


Rules of the Road

“Move Over” Law



- For stationary emergency vehicles with their flashing lights on:
 - » Move over one lane, or
 - » Slow down and pass with caution if a lane is not available.
- Failure to move over is four points on a driver's license and at least a \$150 fine.
- Types of emergency vehicles include:
 - » Police vehicles.
 - » Fire trucks.
 - » Ambulances or rescue vehicles.
 - » Tow trucks.
 - » Service or courtesy vehicles.



School Buses



- Treat school buses like traffic signals.
 - » No lights (green) = proceed safely.
 - » Overhead flashing yellow = prepare to stop.
 - » Overhead flashing red = stop.
- Stop at least 20 feet away.
 - » Vehicles in both lanes of travel must stop.
 - » Vehicles on the opposite side of a divided highway do not need to stop.
- Slow down in or near school and residential areas where children might be playing.
 - » Be on the lookout for safety patrols, crossing guards, bicycles, and playgrounds.
- Watch for children between parked vehicles and other objects.



Construction Zones



- Areas of roadway will be marked by signs and orange reflective cones and barrels.
 - » Drive with extra caution until passing the sign indicating the end of construction zone.
- Adjust driving speed to posted limit.
 - » Lower speed to 45 miles per hour when workers are present.
- Penalties for speeding or crashing in a construction zone include:
 - » Double the fine.
 - » Larger number of points on a driver's license.
 - » Possible jail time.
- Be courteous; construction zones are necessary to improve roads and make them safer.



Lanes of Travel



- Vehicles should travel in the right-hand lane if the road has two or more lanes of travel in one direction.
 - » Exceptions are for passing another vehicle.

Driving Violations



- Driver's license holders are subject to all fees, fines, restrictions, laws, and enforcement of Michigan laws.
- Failure to pay fines and fees or show up in court may result in a suspended license as well as additional costs and penalties.
- The reason for the violation will always be listed on the ticket.

Traffic Violation Bond



- Drivers must still pay the ticket or attend court.
 - » If attending court within 10 days, the bond will be applied toward the fines and court costs, and the remaining bond money will be returned.
 - » If payment is remitted by mail, the bond will be returned.
- Surrendered driver's licenses will be returned upon payment of the ticket or appearance in court.
 - » The ticket will be noted to indicate a surrendered driver's license.
 - » The ticket is not considered a driver's license. Tickets should be paid as soon as possible to avoid driving without a valid license.

Getting Pulled Over



- What to do when you see emergency lights behind you:
 - » Safely pull over to the right side of the road.
 - » Stay calm and wait for the officer.
- What to do when you pull over:
 - » Stay in your car.
 - » Keep both hands on the steering wheel.
 - » Ask passengers to keep their hands visible.
- How to interact with an officer:
 - » Speak calmly.
 - » Provide your driver's license, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance.
 - » Do NOT offer or give money to the officer.
 - » If asked, exit the vehicle.
- Know your rights:
 - » If you feel you don't deserve a ticket, you can dispute it in court. Do not argue the ticket during the traffic stop.
 - » Contact a supervisor after the traffic stop if you feel the officer's actions were inappropriate.
- What to do after the stop:
 - » Buckle your seatbelt.
 - » Make sure it is safe to re-enter the roadway.
 - » Use your turn signal as you re-enter traffic.



Administrative Information

Vehicle Registration and Insurance



- Vehicles must be legally registered in Michigan, another state, or country of residence.
- Vehicles operated in Michigan for more than 90 consecutive days must be registered in Michigan.
- Proof of valid vehicle insurance may be provided to police in paper or electronic form, such as on a mobile phone.
 - » Police may request to have the electronic copy forwarded to them for verification.
- Vehicle owners must purchase Michigan no-fault insurance before registering their vehicle. Out-of-state insurance policies are not accepted.
 - » Coverage for vehicle damage and vehicle theft are not required, but are recommended additions.

Titling and Registering a Vehicle

When purchasing a vehicle from an individual

Purchase vehicle

In Michigan, you may drive your new vehicle directly home without a license plate, so long as it's within three days of purchase.

Get insurance for your new vehicle

Bring title and proof of insurance into a Secretary of State office to get registration, plate, and tabs for the new vehicle

It is best if you AND the seller go to a Secretary of State office to complete the title transfer.

When purchasing a vehicle from a dealership

The dealer will:

Handle all the paperwork for title, registration, and plate

Make sure you have purchased and present proof of Michigan no-fault insurance.

Collect the required fees and taxes

Provide you with copies of all documents

Michigan Driver's License



- Licensed drivers must be a Michigan resident and U.S. citizen or have permanent or temporary legal presence.
 - » Residency means you live in Michigan and have established you are legally present in the state.
- A valid driver's license or state identification card from another state or Canada can be used until residency is established.
- Drivers age 17 and younger are licensed under Michigan's Graduated Driver Licensing program unless licensed in another state for more than one year.



Foreign Driver's License

- Nonresidents from certain countries may operate a vehicle in Michigan with a valid driver's license. Select countries are listed below. For a complete list visit Michigan.gov/SOS.
- Nonresidents with a valid driver's license from all other countries may operate a vehicle in Michigan as long as they:
 - » Are not paid or compensated for driving.
 - » Are legally present in the U.S.
 - » Carry a driver's license with an English translation, an International Driving Permit, or corresponding document.

| Country | Operate a Vehicle with Valid License | Operate a Commercial Motor Vehicle with Valid Commercial License |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Brazil | Yes | Yes |
| Colombia | Yes | Yes |
| Costa Rica | Yes | Yes |
| El Salvador | Yes | Yes |
| Guatemala | Yes | No |
| Haiti | Yes | No |
| Honduras | Yes | Yes |
| Jamaica | Yes | No |
| Mexico | Yes | Yes |
| Nicaragua | Yes | Yes |
| Panama | Yes | Yes |
| Uruguay | Yes | Yes |



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