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Provider and instructor renewal applications

Provider and instructor renewal applications will be mailed approximately 60 days prior to the expiration date of the certificate. Providers should be aware of the expiration dates of their instructors' certificates, and encourage them to renew early so there is no lapse in certification. Every instructor will need to submit a new medical report with his or her renewal. Criminal history reports will NOT need to be submitted with first-time renewal applications for providers or instructors. A fingerprint-based background check will need to be completed for all second renewals, which will occur four years after original certification.

When renewing, instructors must certify they have met the professional development requirement. If contacted by the Driver Education Section (DES), instructors will be required to show proof of completing one of the professional development options.

Other items to note regarding provider renewal applications:

- ◆ Applications will contain preprinted information that is currently on file with the Michigan Department of State (MDOS). Correct any information as instructed on the renewal form and include any required documentation.
- ◆ If a teen provider operates a range and has made any changes to the range since it was inspected, it must be re-approved by contacting DES. All teen providers with ranges must pay a renewal fee of \$75 for each range.

Forms, documents and records

Be sure your forms, documents, and records have been updated to reflect the following:

- Student contracts must include provider certificate number.
- Segment 1 and Segment 2 should outline the new knowledge test requirements, including passing score and retakes.
- Segment 1 observation time needs to be recorded where applicable. Dates and times should be recorded and initialed by the student.

Our telephone number is (517) 241-6850 –
Our e-mail address is *DriverEd@Michigan.gov*
Questions? Contact DES!

Customer service

Occasionally, the DES receives a complaint from a parent or student who feels that a provider or instructor has behaved in an inappropriate manner. We suggest that you ask yourself the following questions:

- ✓ Do I treat each customer with respect?
- ✓ Am I consistent with the way I deal with customers?
- ✓ Do I say or do things that may be offensive to my customers?
- ✓ Do I put myself in situations that may result in ethical or legal problems?
- ✓ Do I always serve the public in a fair, honest, and open manner?

All providers and their employees are expected to behave in a professional manner.

Insert on identification requirements

The booklets “What Every Driver Must Know” and “Michigan Graduated Driver Licensing: A Guide for Parents” will soon be updated to reflect the new identification requirements for applying for a driver’s license. In the meantime, anyone placing new orders will receive current editions along with inserts that should accompany the booklets when distributed to students. The insert (SOS-429) is included with this bulletin so you may duplicate and distribute it with your current inventory of these booklets. If the two booklets are given to students at the same time, only one insert needs to be included.

Possible restrictions on cell phone use by teens

Earlier this summer, Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land announced that teen drivers whose cell phone use contributes to a traffic crash or ticket may be prohibited under a probationary licensing restriction from using a cell phone while driving.

All new drivers, including teens in graduated driver licensing (GDL), are on probation for at least three years. The probationary period allows MDOS to monitor driving performance and impose any necessary licensing controls to promote safe driving habits. Teen drivers under probation who have tickets or crashes on their record face a re-examination, which could result in a license restriction, suspension, or both. Such action would delay the teen’s advancement in the GDL program.

Please pass this information on to your students.

Cell phone use during BTW and classroom instruction

An issue has been raised regarding the use of cell phones by instructors during training. If an instructor is talking on his or her cell phone during behind-the-wheel instruction, full attention is not being given to the student and the driving environment, thereby putting the vehicle’s occupants and others at risk. Each minute the instructor spends on a cell phone is instructional time that may not count toward the required classroom and behind-the-wheel hours paid for and agreed upon in the student contract.

Instructors should refrain from talking on a cell phone while performing their duties.

Segment 1 certificates of completion

With the new identification requirements in place, the reverse side of the Segment 1 Certificate of Completion (dated 2/06) is incorrect. It is imperative that students are informed of the new requirements and are given the chart (SOS-428)

with the correct information. Revised certificates will be sent out when providers place new orders. Providers should use up their current inventory before issuing the revised certificates.

Parent driving permits

When a parent driving permit is issued, it should be written to expire no more than three weeks after the classroom portion ends. The permit may not be recognized by other states. Therefore, if a parent intends for a son or daughter to drive outside of Michigan, the other state's licensing or law enforcement agency should be contacted.

Students must be informed that when they are issued a Segment 1 Certificate of Completion, the parent driving permit is null and void. A provider may want to consider requiring the student to return the parent driving permit in order to be issued a Certificate of Completion. Void the parent driving permit and retain it in the student's file. The student should be advised that the permit cannot be presented at a branch office.

Adult students in Segment 1

Students who are 18 years of age may be allowed to take Segment 1, even though it is not required. It is the responsibility of the provider to ensure that the student possesses a valid temporary instruction permit (TIP) before commencing the behind-the-wheel phase of the course.

It is recommended that you make a copy of the TIP and keep it in the student's file. When the student completes the class, he or she should not be issued a Segment 1 Certificate of Completion. If the student wants verification, the provider may create some type of certificate or provide a letter outlining the type of instruction received.

Monitoring of providers

The Driver Education Program has increased its oversight of teen driver education providers. Program Request and Program Completion Data forms submitted by ALL teen providers are being reviewed. A Notice of Violation will be mailed for failure to comply with certain parts of the law, such as admitting underage students; class size exceeding 36 students or a lesser maximum number as determined by the fire marshal; and employing an instructor who is not certified. Subsequent violations may result in sanctions being imposed, which may lead to probation, suspension, or revocation of certificates and possible administrative fines.

A provider will also be contacted for reasons such as: the knowledge test unique identifier number is not reported on a Program Completion Data form; a Program Request form does not match up with a Program Completion Data form; forms are incomplete; or multiple instructors are listed who may not actually be teaching a specific class. Failure to comply with requirements may result in a "HOLD" being placed on a provider's ability to order materials from MDOS.

Instructor status

If you hire an instructor, or an instructor leaves your school, you MUST notify DES in writing using the DES-022 Driver Education Instructor Employment Form. Be sure to check the list of certified instructors on our Web site to verify that an instructor is certified.

Testing and assessment (teen programs)

Section 6 of the Driver Education Curriculum Guide provides the guidelines for the Web-based knowledge testing and behind-the-wheel assessments.

Testing

- The Web-based knowledge tests for Segment 1 and Segment 2 must now be in use.
- A minimum of two separate tests must be administered to each class to an equal number of students.
- The minimum passing score for both tests is 70 percent.
- If a student fails the first attempt, he/she may retake the test but must take another version. If the student fails a second time, he/she may take the test one more time but it cannot be the original version.
- New tests must be printed and put into use every four months.
- The unique identifier numbers for tests administered must be included on the program completion data forms.

If the Solutions Thru Software Web site requires a “Jurisdiction” when attempting to access the tests, you have somehow lost your registration for the Web site and must reregister your computer. Follow the instructions in your Michigan Driver Education Web-Based Knowledge Testing Manual. Reminder: You must use Internet Explorer in order to access the knowledge tests.

Behind-the-wheel assessment

- During a student’s final drive, an assessment should be made to determine if the student has met the standards of learning and has earned a certificate of completion.
- The assessment should include varied driving environments (low, moderate, and complex risk level areas).
- The assessment should be completed using a predetermined route and should be consistent for all students.
- A written assessment must be completed for each student and retained in his or her file.
- The assessment should be discussed with a parent and a copy should be made available to the parent.

Closing your school?

If a provider decides to discontinue offering driver education, there is a formal close-out procedure that must be followed:

1. Notify DES in writing of your intention to close.
2. You will be sent a packet and requested to return the following:
 - a. Driver Education Provider Closeout Report. Student records must be maintained for a period of not less than four years.
 - b. Provider Certificate.
 - c. Excess Inventory of Certificates (teen programs only). Note the instructions on retaining and returning unused certificates of completion.
3. You will also need to submit any missing documentation, including any outstanding Program Request and/or Program Completion Data forms.

Year-end reporting

The Calendar Year 2008 Driver Education Provider Year-End Report will be mailed out to all certified providers in early December. The report must be submitted to DES by January 31, 2009.

When contacting the Dept. of State

DES welcomes your e-mails and telephone calls regarding questions you may have. Please remember to identify yourself and the provider with whom you are associated. Our e-mail address is **DriverEd@Michigan.gov** and our telephone number is (517) 241-6850.