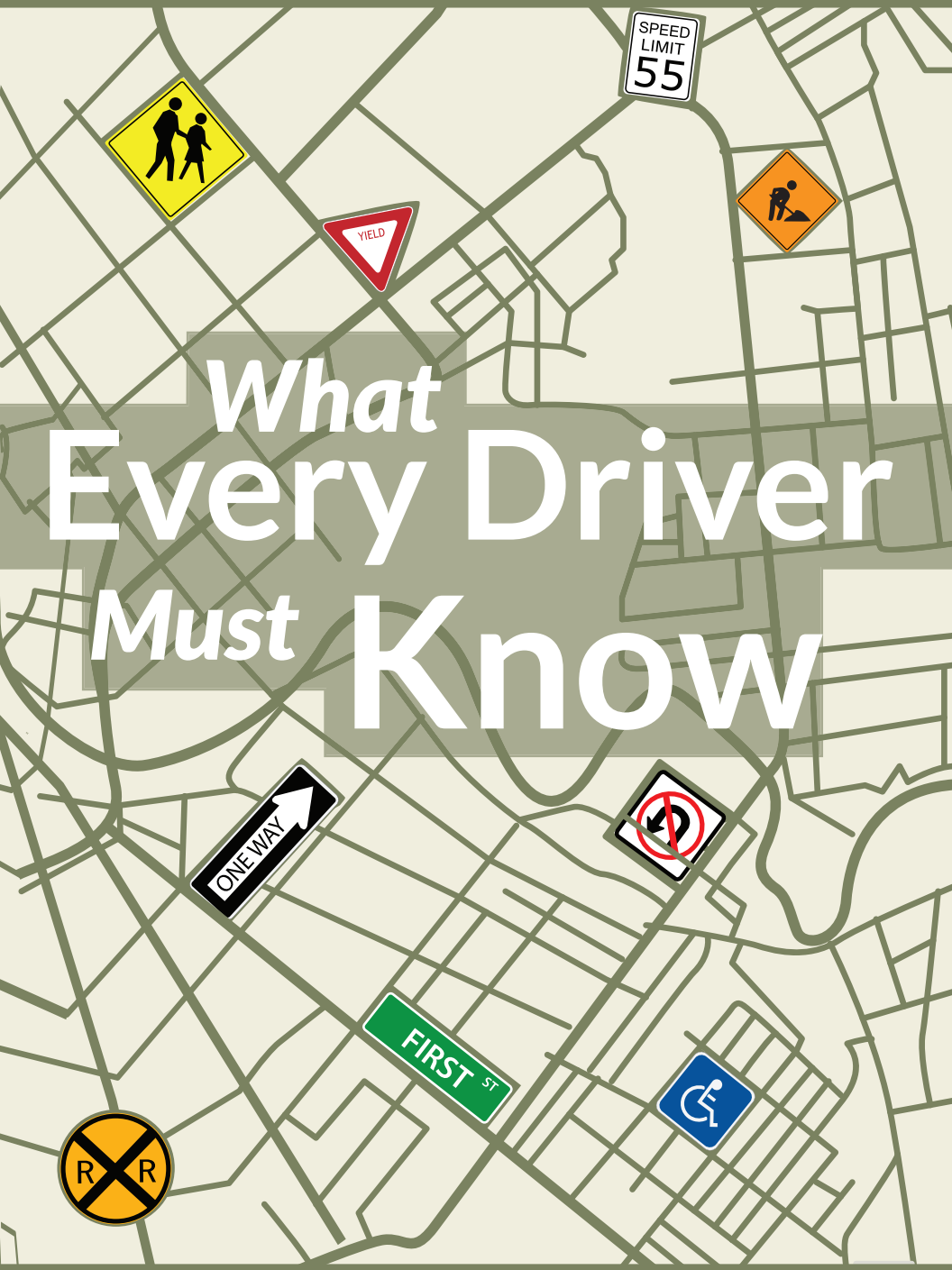
State of Michigan

What Every Driver Must Know



Ruth Johnson, Secretary of State

April 2016

Dear Michigan Motorist:

Today's cars offer you a level of safety and convenience unimaginable a few decades ago. Back-up cameras, blind spot and lane departure warning systems, automatic braking, and traction and stability control are just some of the latest features available on many of today's models.

While these safety features have an important role in protecting motorists, the single most important safety feature in a car remains you as the driver. Driving is a complex task involving an ever changing set of circumstances and conditions. It requires practice, skills and knowledge.

I am pleased to offer this latest edition of What Every Driver Must Know to novice and experienced drivers alike. In it, you will find information about obtaining a driver's license, common traffic laws, signs and signals, and basic driving tips for sharing the road and handling emergency situations.

When driving, please remember to always wear a safety belt, make sure all passengers are appropriately buckled up, obey traffic laws and never drink alcohol or use drugs. Be careful to ensure that distractions such as your mobile phone, navigational and entertainment displays, or eating and drinking do not pull your attention from driving. It is dangerous and illegal to text and drive in Michigan.

Our state offers much for motorists to explore and enjoy. I hope that wherever the road takes you, that you have a pleasant and safe journey.

Sincerely,

Ruth A. Johnson

Ruth Johnson

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Introduction

The **What Every Driver Must Know** booklet contains information about operating a motor vehicle safely on Michigan roads. Although this publication includes information about many Michigan traffic laws, it is not meant as a legal document or as a substitute for the Michigan Vehicle Code. Information in this publication is subject to change.

Please remember that driving is a privilege and not a right. Drivers must drive responsibly and safely, obey traffic laws, and never drink and drive. Finally, make sure that you and your passengers are properly buckled up – it's the law!

Resources

This newest edition of **What Every Driver Must Know** is slimmed down from previous versions. Material that was not related to driving or important for a majority of drivers to know was removed. A resource guide is presented in the back of this booklet that provides other sources for information such as websites, printed materials and a customer service number that can help if you want to know more about topics in **What Every Driver Must Know**.

2014 Michigan Crash Facts

Before you read further, consider these facts about driving in Michigan from the **Michigan Traffic Crash Facts**.

In 2014:

- 298,699 motor vehicle crashes were reported. Deaths numbered 876 and 71,378 people were injured.
- Alcohol was involved in 222 fatal crashes.
- Of all fatal crashes, 27.5 percent involved at least one drinking operator, bicyclist or pedestrian.
- Excessive speed was a factor in 21.1 percent of drivers in fatal crashes.
- Of all fatal crashes, 26.7 percent occurred at intersections.
- Of the 1,280 drivers involved in fatal crashes, 118 (9.2 percent) were under 21 years of age and 274 (21.4 percent)

were younger than 25 years of age.

- According to 2013 data provided by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, motor vehicle crashes account for 39.2 percent of all accidental deaths for children ages 1-14.
- The economic loss in Michigan traffic crashes amounted to more than $8.6 billion in 2013, which is the most recent year of data available. If costs were spread across the state's population, this would translate into a loss of $869.98 per state resident.

Please Join!

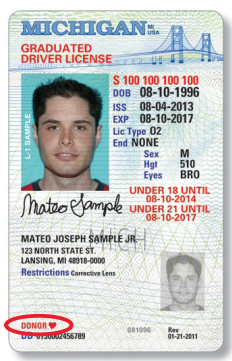
When people apply for a driver's license, they have the opportunity to join the Michigan Organ Donor Registry.

Their license will carry the heart logo signifying they're willing to give the gift of life to someone waiting for a life-saving transplant.

Did you know?

- More than 3,000 Michigan residents are waiting for an organ transplant.
- Each organ donor can save up to eight lives. Each tissue donor can improve the lives of up to 50 people.
- Nearly 10,000 Michigan patients have received a life-saving organ transplant in the last 10 years.
- Cornea transplants have been successful for over 100 years and organ transplants have worked for more than 50.
- On average, 17 Michigan patients receive an organ transplant each week.
- There is no age limit for donation. People in their 90s have been able to donate organs.
- Donation doesn't cost the donor or the donor's family anything.

Please join the Michigan Organ Donor Registry



Sign up when you apply or online at **www.ExpressSOS.com**

1 Michigan Driver's License Information

You must be licensed to operate a motor vehicle on public streets and highways. This chapter provides information about applying for and renewing a Michigan driver's license. The licensing procedures and requirements differ depending on an applicant's age.

Michigan Residents and New Michigan Residents

To be considered a resident, you must reside in Michigan and have established that you are legally present in the state.

Under state law, the Secretary of State is prohibited from issuing an original standard driver's license or state identification card to anyone who is not a legal resident of the state.

If you are a new Michigan resident, you must immediately title and register your vehicle at a Secretary of State office and turn in the titles or proof of ownership from your previous home state. If you have a valid driver's license or state identification card from another state, these can be used in the interim until your state residency is established. Once residency is established, please visit a Secretary of State office to apply for a Michigan driver's license or state ID card.

You must also pass a vision test and pay a fee. No other test is required if you are surrendering a valid out-of-state or Canadian operator's license. An application for a Michigan driver's license other than an operator's license, such as a chauffeur's license or Commercial Driver License, may require additional testing and a background check.

The Secretary of State will contact your previous home state to obtain your driving record, which then becomes part of

your Michigan driving record. If your previous driver's license is suspended or revoked, you must contact your previous state to clear any outstanding issues before your application for a Michigan license will be accepted.

Once your application for a Michigan license is accepted, your current out-of-state driver's license will be invalidated and returned to you because Michigan law permits drivers to hold only one valid driver's license at a time.

General Licensing Requirements

You must meet certain requirements before a Michigan driver's license can be issued. If you are 18 or older and have never been licensed, you are not required to take driver education to obtain a license, although it is strongly recommended.

The requirements for obtaining a license will vary depending on the type of license, group designator or endorsement.

You will not be issued a license if you have never been licensed in Michigan, any other state or country, and you have two or more convictions for moving violations on your driving record within the three years before the date you apply. To be eligible to reapply, you must wait until you have no more than one conviction on your driving record within the three years before the date you reapply.

Teenagers younger than age 18 are required to successfully meet the requirements of Michigan's Graduated Driver Licensing program before they can be licensed. This requirement is waived if you have had a license from another state for more than a year.

Graduated Driver Licensing

Under Graduated Driver Licensing, drivers younger than age 18 must complete two segments of driver education instruction and meet the requirements for each of the three GDL licensing levels. Driving privileges are increased at each new licensing level as the teen driver gains greater skill and confidence. GDL ends for teens when they turn 18.

Applying for a License if You are 18 or Older

If you are age 18 or older, before you can get a Michigan driver's license you must present the following:

- **Proof of Social Security Number**: A Social Security card or other Social Security Administration document containing your name and Social Security number or a letter of ineligibility from the SSA.
- **U.S. Citizenship or Legal Presence Documentation**: A certified copy of your birth certificate,* a valid U.S. passport or Certificate of Citizenship; or legal presence proof if not a U.S. citizen, such as a Permanent Resident Card or an Employment Authorization Card.

  *A certified copy of your birth certificate must have a raised seal or stamp and have been issued by a government unit in the United States or U.S. territory.
- **Identity Document**: A valid driver's license or state-issued ID card, U.S. marriage license, U.S. school records or photo ID issued by a federal or Michigan government agency.
- **Michigan Residency (two proofs required)**: A utility bill, bank statement, paycheck stub with the name and address of the employee, tax assessment or professional license.

In addition, you must:

- Pass a vision test and meet health standards set by the Secretary of State's Office.
- Pass a knowledge test.
- Pay the appropriate license fee.
- Complete a minimum 30 days of practice driving on a Temporary Instruction Permit.
- Pass a driving skills test. The skills test will be given by an independent testing organization approved by the Secretary of State.

If you have a valid driver's license from another state, the written knowledge and driving skills tests as well as the 30-day practice requirements may be waived.

If you meet the requirements, you will be issued a temporary operator's permit after paying the appropriate fees. Your driver's license will be mailed to you. In some instances, because of medical conditions or other reasons, restrictions may be placed on your driver's license. If any special licensing conditions are required, these conditions or restrictions will be printed on the driver's license. Drivers licensed for the first time will be placed on probation for a minimum of three years.

Providing your Social Security Number

State and federal laws require the Secretary of State to collect Social Security numbers to verify U.S. citizenship or legal presence and to assist in child support collection. A letter of ineligibility from the Social Security Administration must be presented if you do not have a Social Security number and wish to obtain a standard license or ID card. The letter can be no more than 30 days old. All Social Security information will be verified.

For questions about Social Security or to replace a lost Social Security card, contact the SSA at 800-772-1213 (voice), 800-325-0778 (TTY), or visit the SSA website at ssa.gov.

Providing Proof of Legal Presence

To apply for a standard driver's license or state ID card, valid proof of U.S. citizenship or legal presence in the United States must be presented. Some of the documents that may be provided as proof of U.S. citizenship or legal presence include a certified copy of your birth certificate with a raised seal that was issued by a government unit in the United States or U.S. territory, a valid, unexpired U.S. passport or a certificate of citizenship or naturalization, a Permanent Resident Card or an Employment Authorization Card.

The first and last names and date of birth on the legal presence and identity documents should match. If your current legal name is different from the name on your birth certificate or legal presence document, you must show legal proof of the name change, such as an original marriage license, divorce decree or court order.

Providing Proof of Identity

You must also provide proof of identity when applying for a driver's license or state ID card. Only original documents will be accepted. Photocopies or facsimiles cannot be used. More than one document may be required.

Providing Proof of Residency

Before your driver's license or state ID card application can be processed, you must present proof that you are a Michigan resident. At least two documents must be presented. Acceptable documents include a utility bill, credit card bill or account statement issued within the last 90 days, pay stub, earnings statement, mortgage, rental or lease agreement or an insurance policy. Residency documents in a family member's name may be used if the family relationship can be established by other forms of documented proof.

Physical Standards

The Secretary of State office staff will ask you a few general health questions as part of the screening procedure. Your application may be denied pending a reexamination with additional medical information should there be any question about your physical condition and your ability to operate a motor vehicle safely.

Vision and Knowledge Tests

You will be given a vision test to determine if your vision meets minimum standards. If corrective lenses, such as glasses or contact lenses, are needed to pass the test, your driver's license will indicate you must wear them while driving.

If you fail the vision test, your eye-care specialist must complete a vision statement documenting that you meet the vision standards. Sometimes special driving limitations, such as "daylight driving only," will be required based on the vision statement and other information acquired by the Secretary of State.

If you have never been licensed, you will be given a knowledge test to determine how well you know Michigan traffic laws and safe

driving practices. Applicants age 18 or older will be given this test at the Secretary of State office when applying for a Temporary Instruction Permit. Teens in the Graduated Driver Licensing program must pass a knowledge test as a part of the Segment 1 driver education class.

If you are required to take a knowledge test for your original operator's or chauffeur's license, arrive at the Secretary of State office at least one hour before closing to allow enough time to complete the test.

If you have difficulty speaking or reading English, branch office staff will provide a list of available foreign language interpreters. Knowledge tests are also available in many languages. Please contact the Department of State Information Center at 888-SOS-MICH (767-6424) in advance to obtain a list of interpreters. Hearing-impaired customers can request a sign language interpreter or use an interpreter they know.

Temporary Instruction Permits

A Temporary Instruction Permit allows you to practice driving with a licensed adult for up to 180 days.

A TIP is issued if you are age 18 or older and:

- You have never been licensed.
- Your license has been expired for more than four years.
- You hold a driver's license from another country. However, obtaining a TIP is optional if your out-of-country license is valid; a written test, vision test, and road test are still required.

Before obtaining a TIP, you must present proof of a valid Social Security number or a letter of ineligibility, U.S. citizenship or legal presence in the U.S., identity and Michigan residency. You must also pass vision, written knowledge and road sign tests. You must practice driving with a licensed adult for at least 30 days before you are eligible to apply for a Michigan driver's license. The 30-day practice period is waived if you have previously had a driver's license. You must pass a driving skills test before a driver's license will be issued.

Michigan has reciprocity agreements that allow applicants with a driver's license from Canada, Germany and the Republic of Korea

(South Korea) to convert their driver's license to Michigan without taking a written test or road test. Only a vision test is required. All identity requirements must be met.

Driving Skills Test

You will need to take a driving skills test if:

- You are applying for a Level 2 License under Graduated Driver Licensing.
- You are age 18 or older, have never been licensed and are applying for an original driver's license.
- Your last driver's license has been expired for more than four years.
- You hold a driver's license from a country other than Canada, Germany, or Republic of Korea (South Korea).

Eligibility requirements for taking a driving skills test differ depending on your age.

If you are younger than age 18, you must have:

- Completed Segment 2 of driver education.
- Your log showing that you have completed at least 50 hours of supervised driving, including 10 at night. (Driving logs are available in The Parent's Supervised Driving Guide or through the free mobile app RoadReady.)
- Held a Level 1 License for at least six months.
- Not had any convictions, civil infractions, license suspensions or at-fault crashes during the 90-day period immediately preceding your driving skills test and application for your Level 2 License.

If you are age 18 or older, you must:

- First obtain a Temporary Instruction Permit before taking a driving skills test. A 30-day practice period may be required.

Driving skills tests are administered by independent third-party testing organizations approved by the Secretary of State. A list of approved third-party testing organizations is available at all Secretary of State offices and from the Secretary of State website. Be sure to ask the third-party testing organization you choose about its pricing

policies before scheduling your test. The Secretary of State does not set driving skills test fees or pricing policies.

Applicants who are hearing impaired or not fluent in English may use an interpreter during the driving skills test. (Interpreters are not allowed during either the written knowledge tests or the driving skills test for a Commercial Driver License.) The interpreter will be required to present photo identification to the examiner and may only interpret the instructions as the examiner gives them. Lists of approved sign language and foreign language interpreters are available through the department. Applicants may also bring their own interpreters. For more information, please call 888-SOS-MICH (767-6424).

The first part of the driving skills test requires you to pass a series of off-street, closed-course maneuvers followed by an on-road driving skills test. After passing the first part, you must then pass an on-road driving test to receive your driving skills certificate. The driving skills test includes urban, expressway, rural highway and residential driving.

Complete study information is provided in the Secretary of State publication Driving Skills Test Study Guide available at any Secretary of State office or on the Secretary of State website. You should review this study guide thoroughly before taking the driving skills test.

Restricted License Due to Disability or Illness

When applying for an original or renewal driver's license, you may be requested to provide a "Physician's Statement of Examination." A vision statement may be requested in some cases. A physician or physican's assistant licensed in Michigan or another state must complete the physician's statement. A physician's statement is required if the Secretary of State has reason to believe you have had a fainting spell, blackout, seizure or other loss of consciousness in the preceding six months. For a chauffeur or Commercial Driver License, you must not have had any blackouts, fainting spells

or seizures within the last 12 months.

A physician's statement also is needed for any physical or mental infirmity, impairment, disability or disease that may affect your ability to drive safely. The physician or physician's assistant must accurately describe your condition, including any disability or illness, and any medications you have been taking. The form must be returned to the Michigan Secretary of State Traffic Safety Division where the physician's statement will be reviewed to determine if you meet Michigan's physical and mental standards.

- An unrestricted driver's license may be issued if a physician's statement does not indicate a physical or mental impairment is present and if all other standards are met.
- If a physician's statement indicates a serious physical or mental condition at the time you renew your driver's license, you will be required to attend a driver reexamination. During the reexamination, your ability to operate a motor vehicle safely will be evaluated. Every effort will be made to help you keep your driver's license and continue to drive safely. If you have such a condition and are renewing your license, please begin the renewal process several weeks before your license expires to allow adequate time for processing.
- If a restricted driver's license is issued because of a disability or illness, a periodic driver reexamination may be required.

Other Licenses and Endorsements

Most Michigan drivers will only need an operator's license. However, professions such as taxi driver, school bus driver or commercial truck driver require special licensing and endorsements.

Chauffeur's License: You must be at least age 16, have completed driver education and passed a chauffeur's license knowledge test before a chauffeur's license can be issued. A chauffeur's license is needed to operate a bus, school bus, taxi, limousine, delivery vehicle or for any occupation in which you get paid to drive. A Commercial Driver License also may be required, depending on the vehicle type or the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating.

Commercial Driver License: Before you can operate commercial motor vehicles, you must be at least age 18, have been suspension free for 36 months before the date of application and have the appropriate Michigan CDL group designation on your driver's license. Drivers between ages 18 and 21 can operate a commercial vehicle only in Michigan. You must be at least age 21 to drive a vehicle across state lines or to transport hazardous materials in amounts that require the vehicle to be placarded.

A commercial vehicle endorsement will be required in addition to a group designation when operating double trailers, tank vehicles, vehicles carrying hazardous materials, commercial buses and school buses.

Moped License: If you have a valid operator's or chauffeur's license, you are allowed to operate a moped on public roadways. If you do not have a valid operator's or chauffeur's license and are at least age 15, you may apply for a moped license at a Secretary of State office. You are not eligible for a moped license if your operator's or chauffeur's license is suspended, revoked or denied.

Motorcycle Endorsement: A valid driver's license with a motorcycle endorsement is required to operate a motorcycle in Michigan. To obtain the CY endorsement, you must either pass a motorcycle safety course or the motorcycle skills test administered by a third-party testing organization. A motorcycle safety course is required for teens between 16 and 17 and for riders who fail the skills test twice.

Probationary License Program

New drivers, including teen drivers under Graduated Driver Licensing, are placed on probation for a minimum of three years. The probationary period is a way for the Secretary of State to monitor the driving performance of new drivers. Probation is a separate program from GDL, but works like GDL to encourage new drivers to reduce their crash risk and drive safely.

Changing Information on Your License

Make sure your driver's license shows your correct name and residential address. If you need to change your name on your driver's license, you must first change your name with the Social Security Administration. Present your proof of name change along with your valid driver's license to the SSA. Allow at least three business days for the SSA website to update, before visiting a Secretary of State office. At the branch office, present your license and proof of the name change, such as a marriage certificate, divorce decree or legal name change document. The name change will be processed and a new driver's license will be issued for a fee.

Michigan law requires that your driver's license address correspond to your residence and match the address on your voter identification card. You may submit a change of address online at ExpressSOS.com, at a Secretary of State office or by mail. If you are submitting a change of address at a branch office, bring your driver's license. Your driver's license will be updated with your new address. There is no charge for this service.

You also may submit a change of address by mail. Change-of-address forms are available on the Secretary of State website. Complete the form and mail it to the address provided.

ExpressSOS.com is a convenient and secure option for changing your address online. A change of address submitted online will affect all Secretary of State files associated with your name, including your driver's license or state ID card, vehicle records and voter registration as well as transactions in your online shopping cart.

When you submit a change of address in person or by mail, the procedures for updating your voter registration address also will be explained. Your driver's license may be suspended or revoked if you fail to change your address with the Secretary of State.

Renewing Your License

A driver's license is usually valid for four years and expires on your birthday in the year shown on the license's upper right corner. If you are younger than age 21, your driver's license expires on your

21st birthday.

To remind you to renew your driver's license, the Secretary of State sends a renewal notice about 45 days before expiration. The renewal notice is sent to the address listed on department records. Text and email reminders are available if you provide the department with your email address or mobile phone number.

Do not let your driver's license expire unless you will no longer be driving. Driving without a valid license is illegal.

If you renew your operator's license after its expiration date, you will pay a late fee in addition to the regular renewal fee.

A driver's license will not be renewed if your driving record shows three or more unpaid parking tickets or if your driver's license has been suspended or revoked. A renewal application also may be denied if you have failed to provide a valid Social Security number or letter of ineligibility from the Social Security Administration and proof of U.S. citizenship or legal presence.

When renewing your driver's license at a Secretary of State office, a vision screening will be given. A new photograph will also be taken.

Cash, checks and money orders as well as Discover, MasterCard and Visa debit and credit cards are accepted at Secretary of State offices. Find the office nearest you by using the department's online Branch Office Locator.

The Decision to Give Up Driving

Choosing to give up your privilege to drive can be a difficult decision. There are many reasons to consider when deciding whether to continue driving, such as no longer being comfortable at the wheel, feeling that driving is becoming too risky, concerns that your health or medications are adversely affecting your driving, having a "close" call or a serious crash and worries about getting lost. Your decision is important because it not only involves your independence but your safety and the safety of others on the road.

There are a number of organizations that have publications and resources available to help you decide when it may be time to give up

driving. Aging drivers, their families and the professionals who work with them are invited to visit the Safe Drivers Smart Options: Keys to Lifelong Mobility website at michigan.gov/agingdriver. Developed by a consortium of state and private entities, it is an online resource for active older drivers, and for those needing to limit their driving and find other transportation choices. Website visitors will find useful information such as how to assess driving skills, transition to driving retirement and identify alternative transportation options in their area. The website includes a PDF of the booklet **Great Lakes, Great Years – safety from shore to shore: Michigan's Guide for Aging Drivers and Their Families** (the booklet is also available in Secretary of State offices).

If you decide to leave the driving to someone else, return your driver's license to a Secretary of State office, where you may obtain a state identification card.

A state ID card is used in place of the driver's license for identification purposes. Free identification cards are provided to those who are legally blind, drivers 65 or older who voluntarily relinquish their driver's license and drivers whose driving privilege is suspended, revoked or denied due to a physical or mental disability.

2 Seat Belts, Safety Seats and Air Bags

Click It or Ticket: Under Michigan's seat belt and child-safety restraint laws, a law enforcement officer may stop a vehicle if the driver and occupants are not properly buckled up. Please review the information in this chapter and obey these laws.

Buckle Up, It's the Law!

Michigan law requires

- All front seat passengers to be buckled up (including the driver).
- All passengers younger than age 16 to be buckled up, in all seating positions.
- All children younger than age 8 to be in an approved child-safety seat or booster seat, in all seating positions, unless 4 feet and 9 inches or taller.

Photograph courtesy of the Office of Highway Safety Planning

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that seat belts save more than 13,000 lives each year and that buckling up is the single most effective thing you can do to protect yourself in a crash.

- Be responsible – make sure all passengers are properly buckled up.
- Even if the vehicle is equipped with air bags, they are not a substitute for wearing a seat belt.
- Everyone in the vehicle will be safer when seat belts are

worn correctly – shoulder belt across the middle of the chest away from the neck, with the lap belt worn low across the hips, below the stomach.

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

Protecting Children and Teens

Since the Michigan Child Passenger Protection Law was enacted, use of child restraints and safety belts has increased, while deaths and injuries have decreased.

However, many people use child-restraint devices improperly. Make certain both the child-safety restraint and your child are properly buckled before you drive.

Michigan's child passenger safety law mandates that:

- Children are to be properly buckled in a car seat or booster seat until they are 8 years old or 4-feet, 9-inches tall. Children must ride in a safety seat until they reach the age requirement or the height requirement, whichever comes first. Children must be properly secured in the child-restraint system in accordance with the child-restraint and vehicle manufacturer's instructions and federal safety standards.
- Removing a child from a car seat to nurse while the vehicle is moving is prohibited.
- Children younger than age 4 must be positioned in a rear seat if the vehicle is equipped with a rear seat. If all available rear seats are occupied by children under age 4, then the child may be positioned in the child-restraint system in the front seat.
- A child in a rear-facing child-restraint system may only be placed in the front seat if the front passenger air bag is deactivated.
- Young people younger than age 18 are prohibited from riding in the open bed of a pickup truck traveling more than 15 mph. The law allows exceptions for vehicles used by farmers, construction workers, the military, participants in parades and authorized emergency and rescue personnel.

Never hold a child on your lap or buckle a child with another passenger into one seat belt. Always insist children buckle their seat belts before starting the engine.

Assistance with child-safety seat installation is available at many community agencies, such as local public health departments. Avoid buying secondhand seats as they may not meet federal safety standards, may not work properly, or may have missing parts or instructions. And, if there is a recall, you may not receive notification.

Air Bags

Air bags are designed to provide vehicle occupants with extra protection in a crash. Depending on the make and model, today's vehicles may have air bags in a variety of locations, including the steering wheel, dashboard, roof columns and door panels. Sensors within the vehicle determine when an air bag will deploy based on the type and severity of the crash. For the best protection always wear a seat belt, even in vehicles equipped with air bags. Seat belts remain the best protection in rollover, side impact and rear-end crashes.

- A child in a rear-facing child-restraint system may be placed in the front seat only if the front passenger air bag is deactivated.
- Parents are encouraged to seat all children ages 12 and younger in the rear seat of the vehicle to avoid potential injury from an air bag in the event of a crash.
- It is recommended that drivers sit with at least 10 inches between the center of their breastbone and the center of the steering wheel.
- If you are pregnant, it is recommended that you wear your seat belt with the lap portion of the belt correctly positioned over the hips (not the stomach) and the shoulder portion across the chest. Sit as far back as possible from the air bag.

Children Left Unattended in Vehicles

Under Michigan law, it is illegal to leave children less than 6 years old unattended in a vehicle if the amount of time or circumstances

in which they are left poses an unreasonable risk of harm or injury. Parents or guardians who leave their children in a vehicle under the supervision of someone age 13 or older who is not legally incapacitated are not in violation of the law.

Make sure your children are safe from harm if you must leave your vehicle. And, do not forget about your pets. Pets left alone in vehicles may also suffer injury or harm.

Visit the online resource for new drivers

www.Michigan.gov/TeenDriver

The ins and outs of driver's ed ...

- How to find a certified driver education program
- What to expect from Segment 1
- What to expect from Segment 2

Getting a license ...

Michigan's Graduated Licensing

- Required documents to take to the Secretary of State
- Eligibility requirements
- Restrictions and violation consequences
- Probationary period

Parents & Guardians

- Knowing your role
- Coaching your teen's driving
- Setting rules & limits

Plus ...

- Moped license and motorcycle endorsement
- Teen Driving Risk Awareness
- Publications
- Forms
- Resources
- FAQs

Ruth Johnson
Secretary of State

3 Basic Skills, Laws and Safety

This chapter provides information about basic skills, laws and safety, with tips for preparing to drive, controlling speed, signaling, yielding, turning at intersections and at red lights, using lanes, passing, freeway driving, parking and using cruise control. Safe driving requires that you understand and use these basic skills.

Driving Safely

The following tips can help you drive safely:

- Concentrate on your driving. A momentary distraction can lead to a crash. Do not allow tasks such as talking on a mobile phone, texting, using a GPS, tuning the radio, searching for a compact disk or eating distract your attention from the road.
- Drive defensively.
- Obey all traffic control devices and traffic laws.
- Be courteous to others.
- Communicate your intentions by using your turn signals or hand-and-arm signals.
- Be aware and keep alert. Even though you follow the laws, realize others may not.
- Recognize that you share the road with others whether they are walking, bicycling or driving.
- Avoid looking at any one thing for more than a few seconds.
- Watch for vehicles coming from alleys or parking places when driving in a business district.
- Always give yourself enough time and space to do what you need to do safely. Never follow another vehicle too closely.

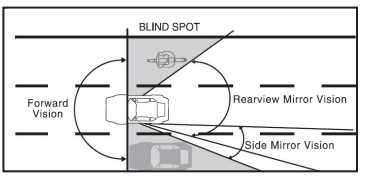
- Drive cautiously and increase your following distance at night, during bad weather, rush hour, during maneuvers such as lane changes and when approaching intersections.
- Do not drive when you are tired.
- Always obey a law enforcement officer's orders. An officer's directions take priority over other traffic control devices.

Before operating a vehicle:

- Check for clean headlights, taillights and brake lights. Make sure all lights and turn signals work properly. You can be ticketed for defective or missing equipment.
- Clean the windshield and windows.
- Make sure your tires are properly inflated and check them for any damage or wear.
- Check in front and behind the vehicle for objects, animals or people in your path.

Before starting the engine:

- Make sure you are seated comfortably in the driver's seat.
- Make sure you and all passengers (including children) are properly buckled up.
- Check mirrors and look again for anything in your path. Most cars have at least two blind spots or areas around them that you cannot see in your mirror – to the left rear and right rear of the vehicle. Adjust the inside rearview mirror so you can see the center of the road and any traffic behind the vehicle. To minimize blind spots, many drivers adjust the left and right outside mirrors to see the edges of the vehicle when seated in a normal driving position. An alternate adjustment method can further reduce blind spots. While seated in the driver seat, lean left to touch your head to the driver side window; adjust the left outside mirror to barely show the rear edge of the vehicle. Then lean right to position your head above the center console or in line with



the rearview mirror; adjust the right outside mirror to barely show the rear edge of the vehicle.

- Turn your head to check the blind spots before every lane change. You cannot completely eliminate blind spots, but they can be made smaller by properly adjusting the mirrors.
- Know the type of braking system installed in your vehicle. Be sure to follow the instructions in the owner's manual.

Speed Limits

Michigan's Basic Speed Law means you must drive at a "careful and prudent" speed in all driving conditions. You must drive at a speed that always allows you to stop within the clear distance ahead. This speed is never faster than the posted speed limit. Depending on conditions, it may be slower than the posted speed limit. Anticipate trouble ahead. Be ready to stop safely.

Speed Limits

Watch for and obey regulatory speed signs. The following summarizes some of the standard speed limits defined under the Michigan Vehicle Code.

- 15 mph – In mobile home parks and some municipal parks.
- 25 mph – In platted subdivisions (showing boundaries, streets, easements and other features of surveyed lots) and condominium complexes. Watch for signs when driving through business districts, county, state and federal parks, on roads adjacent to parks and playgrounds, and in school zones as posted speed limits vary.
- 45 mph – In a work zone if posted. If a work zone is not posted for 45 mph, then the speed limit is the normal speed limit for that area.
- 55 mph – Unless otherwise posted, on all streets that are not designated freeways and on all highways.
- 70 mph maximum/55 mph minimum – On all freeways unless posted otherwise. School buses and trucks are restricted to 60 mph. On freeways with speed limits less than 70 mph, school buses and trucks are restricted to 55 mph.

Stopping Distances

Your stopping distance can be affected by fatigue, how well you pay attention, the type and weight of your vehicle, the condition of your tires and brakes, the type of road surface and the weather. Try to estimate how much time and space you have for stopping on either dry or wet pavement.

A three- to four-second following distance is required. When the rear of the vehicle ahead passes a sign or any other stationary point, calculate the time it takes you to reach the same spot by counting "one thousand one, one thousand two, one thousand three." You are following too closely if you pass the mark before you finish counting for three seconds. When speeds are increased, or during adverse driving conditions, increase your following distance up to six seconds or more if necessary.

Wet pavement requires more stopping time and space. To make a smooth stop, increase pressure on the brake pedal gradually and just before you stop, reduce the pressure.

Look Down the Road 12 Seconds

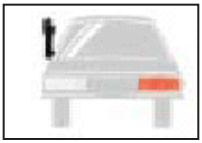
This rule means always look ahead of the vehicle about 12 seconds worth of travel time down the road. To estimate this distance, choose a fixed object near the road ahead and begin counting, "one-thousand one, one thousand two…" until the front of your vehicle passes the object. If you have not counted to "one-thousand twelve," you should be looking further ahead.

A defensive driver anticipates problems ahead and is prepared to react in time. Keep a safe distance behind another vehicle. Under poor or slippery driving conditions, allow even more time.

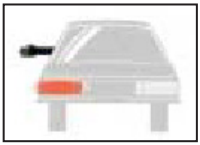
Signaling

Signaling is a legal requirement and a courtesy. Before stopping, turning or changing lanes, look to see if it is safe. Communicate to other drivers by giving the required signal, either using your left hand and arm or your vehicle's turn signal. Signal at least 100 feet ahead of where you plan to turn. In heavy traffic or on freeways, signal sooner so drivers behind you have time to adjust their speed.

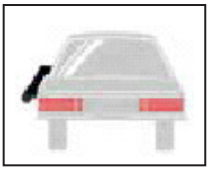
Left arm and hand bent up for a right turn.



Left arm and hand straight out for a left turn.



Left arm and hand bent down for slow or stop.

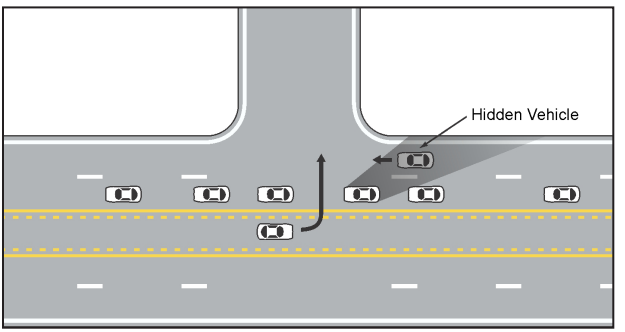


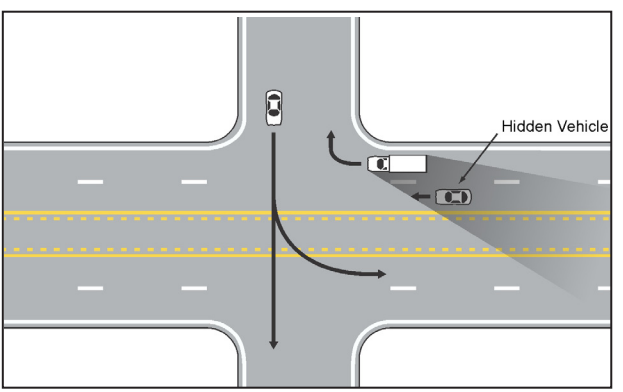
Intersections

Crashes at intersections result in more traffic fatalities and serious injuries than on any other portion of the road. Being alert and cautious at intersections will help keep you safe. As you approach an intersection, check for oncoming and cross traffic, other highway users, signals, signs and pavement markings, the condition of the roadway and areas of limited visibility.

- Be alert for vehicles and pedestrians that may disregard a traffic signal or other traffic control device and proceed through an intersection without stopping or yielding the right-of-way. Anytime you are not sure what other drivers are going to do, be safe and let them go first.
- Keep alert and look twice for smaller vehicles approaching an intersection, such as motorcycles, bicycles and mopeds. Because of their size, it may be difficult to judge their speed and distance. Protect these riders by being courteous and allowing them to clear the intersection safely.
- Be especially cautious if you cannot see the road or traffic clearly at an intersection because of trees, buildings, piles of snow or other obstructions. Edge forward slowly until you can see past whatever is blocking your view. Once the intersection is clear or traffic signals indicate you may proceed, continue driving with care.

- When entering an intersection at sunrise or sunset, use extra care as other drivers may have difficulty seeing you.
- If you have entered an intersection when the signal light changes, complete your turn as soon as traffic clears. Do not try to back up in an effort to avoid blocking the intersection.
- Be alert for "hidden vehicles" when crossing multiple lanes. Traffic may be hidden by larger vehicles that are traveling in the same direction.





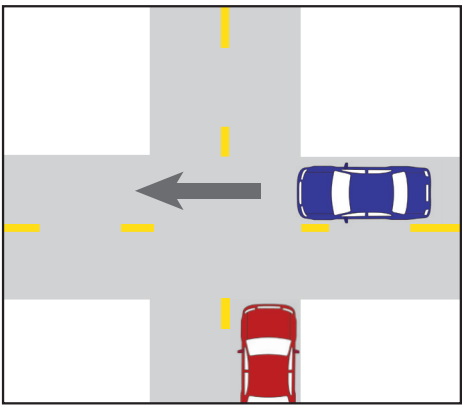
Yielding

Yield the right-of-way at all intersections:

- When turning, check the road you are turning onto and yield to pedestrians and other vehicles present.
- Yield the right-of-way to vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians in the intersection.

At intersections without any signals or signs, or at intersections with all stop signs:

- Yield to the driver on the right if you reach the intersection at the same time as another vehicle. Yield to any vehicle that reaches an intersection before you.
- At a "T" intersection without any signals or signs, yield the right-of-way to vehicles and pedestrians on the through road.
- You must stop and yield the right-of-way when entering a highway from an alley, private road or driveway.

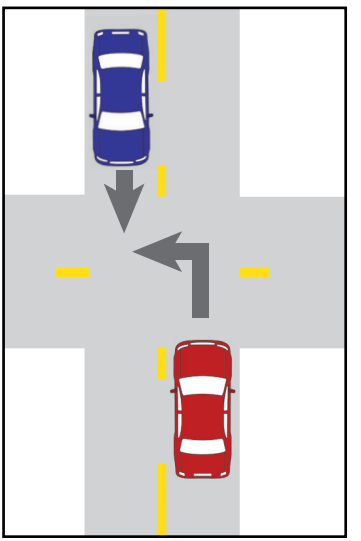


At traffic signals:

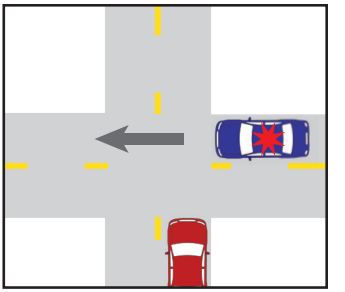
- When turning left at a traffic signal, you must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and oncoming traffic.

At stop or yield signs:

- Yield the right-of-way to any vehicle or pedestrian in the intersection and cross traffic that is not required to stop.
- When turning left at a stop or yield sign, yield the right-of-way to cross traffic and pedestrians. Yield to the first vehicle from the opposite side that is going straight or turning right. Then, you may turn left so long as cross traffic and pedestrians are still clear.



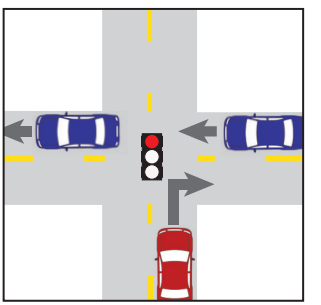
Other reasons to yield:



- You must yield when directed by a uniformed law enforcement officer and when directed by flag people at construction sites.
- You must yield for vehicles in a funeral procession.
- You must yield to emergency vehicles, approaching from any direction or, if stopped, when their lights are flashing. Time is critical in an emergency situation. Pulling over and allowing emergency vehicles to reach their destinations as quickly and safely as possible may save a life.
- You also must yield whenever you are approaching or passing a stopped waste collection, utility service or road maintenance vehicle with its lights flashing.

Turning on a Red Light

Right turn on red: Unless a sign tells you "no turn on red," you may turn right at a red light after coming to a complete stop. You must yield to pedestrians and approaching traffic. Make sure to look to your left, front and right before starting your turn. Then turn carefully.



Left turn on red: Unless a sign tells you "no turn on red," you may turn left on a red light when entering a one-way street from another one-way street, but you must first stop and yield to cross traffic. (Figure 3-1.)

You also may make a left turn from a two-way street onto a one-way street with traffic going in the same direction as the turn, but first yield to pedestrians, cross traffic and approaching traffic. (Figure 3-2.)

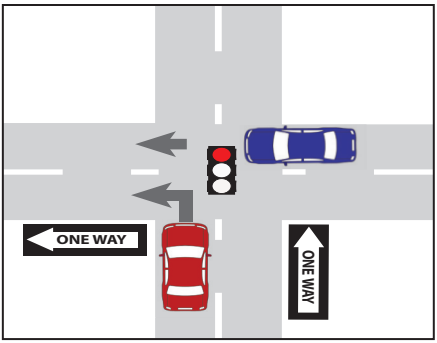


Figure 3-1

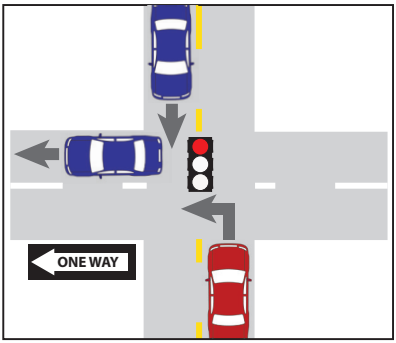


Figure 3-2

Lane Position when Turning

When turning at an intersection, use the pavement markings, signs or signals for direction on how to proceed.

If there is nothing posted, keep the following points in mind:

- When turning right onto a multiple lane road, you are required to turn into the lane closest to the right-hand curb or road side.
- When turning left onto a multiple lane road, you are required to turn into the lane that is just to the right of the center line of the roadway.
- When turning left onto a multiple lane one-way road, turn into the lane closest to the left-hand curb or road side.
- When multiple turn lanes are present, complete your turn by entering the lane that corresponds to the lane you are

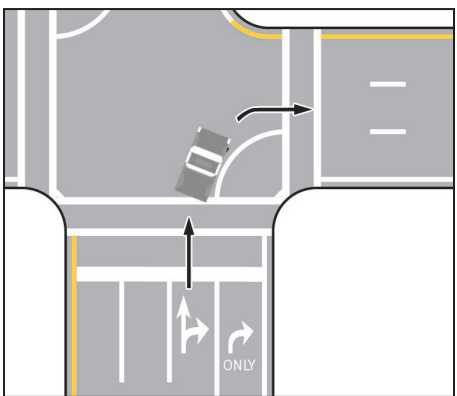
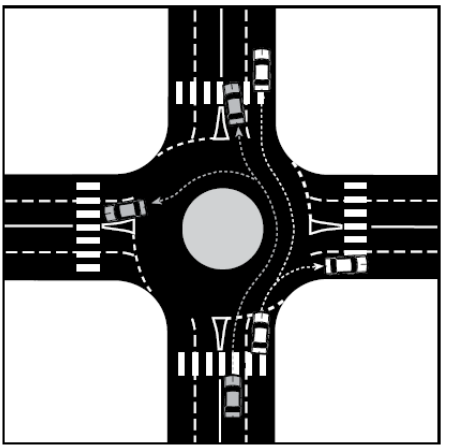


Figure 3-3: Right turn with multiple turn lanes

leaving. Be alert for drivers next to you who may cross into other lanes as they turn. (See Figure 3-3.)

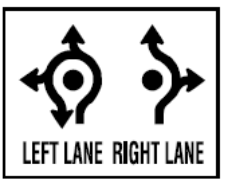
Roundabouts

A modern roundabout is a circular intersection where entering traffic yields to vehicles traveling counterclockwise around a central island. Vehicles entering from each leg of the intersection must yield to the traffic already in the roundabout, which is coming from the left. Vehicles exit the roundabout by making a right turn onto the desired road.



Approaching the roundabout:

- Slow down as you approach the roundabout.
- Look for roadside signs and pavement markings to direct you into the correct lane before entering the roundabout.
- As you approach the yield line, look to your left before proceeding into the roundabout.
- When an appropriate gap in traffic appears, enter the roundabout and merge with the flow of the other vehicles. Never make a left turn to enter a roundabout – this will place you in front of oncoming traffic.



Traveling in a roundabout:

- Always stay to the right of the center island.
- Vehicles within the roundabout have the right of way.
- Do not stop within a roundabout unless it is the only way to safely avoid a collision or other danger.

- If an emergency vehicle is heard or seen approaching, do not stop. Continue to your exit, pull over to the right and stop, allowing the emergency vehicle to pass.
- Avoid changing lanes in a multiple-lane roundabout. Move into the lane you need before entering the roundabout.
- Give special consideration to trucks, trailers and other large vehicles. Avoid passing or driving next to large vehicles, as they may need more than one lane to navigate through the roundabout.
- Refrain from passing other vehicles, bicycles and mopeds.
- When entering or exiting a roundabout, watch for pedestrians crossing the street.

Exiting the roundabout:

- Maintain a slow speed.
- Indicate your exit by using your turn signal.
- Do not accelerate until you are beyond the pedestrian crossing at the exit.

Passing

When passing other vehicles, always check your rearview and side-view mirrors for any overtaking traffic. Use your turn signal to indicate your intentions. Check blind spots by turning your head to see if you can safely move from your lane without interfering with traffic. It is illegal to exceed the speed limit or use the shoulder of the road to pass. When about to pass a vehicle on a divided highway, move into the passing lane well before passing. When passing a pedestrian or a slow-moving vehicle, such as a bicycle, farm equipment or a horse and buggy, allow adequate room so that the person or vehicle is not endangered.

Passing on the left: On a two- or three-lane road with traffic moving in both directions, you may pass on the left when overtaking another vehicle if there are no signs or other markings prohibiting passing and it can be done safely.

Passing another vehicle on the left is prohibited when:

- You must cross a solid yellow line.

- There is a "no passing" sign.
- Approaching a hill or curve where your view is obstructed.
- Your view is obstructed within 100 feet of a bridge, viaduct or tunnel.
- Oncoming traffic is close enough so you would interfere with the safe operation of the approaching vehicle or the vehicle being passed.
- You cannot see clearly ahead.
- When the center lane of a three-lane road is marked for left turns only.

When passing or preparing to pass another vehicle by using the center lane of a three-lane road, always use extreme caution. Approaching vehicles may also be preparing to pass. If you and an approaching vehicle move into the center lane at the same time, a serious crash could occur. If the center lane is marked for left turns only, using this lane for passing or merging is prohibited.

After passing another vehicle, return to the right lane when there is enough room to return safely. One rule of thumb is to return to your lane when it is possible to see both headlights of the vehicle you passed in the rearview mirror.

Remember to allow extra room when pulling a trailer. Do not try to pass more than one vehicle at a time or follow too closely when another vehicle is passing slower traffic.

A driver being passed on the left must give way to the passing vehicle. Do not increase speed until the other vehicle has completely passed.

Passing on the right: When two or more lanes of traffic are moving in the same direction, passing other vehicles in either lane is allowed. However, slower moving vehicles should always stay in the lane farthest to the right except when preparing to make a left turn.

When driving in the right lane, passing another vehicle should be done cautiously as the driver of the other vehicle may not see you and may turn into your path. Passing on the right of another vehicle by crossing the solid white line that marks the edge of the roadway

is prohibited even if the shoulder is paved or a bike lane is present. It is also illegal to use a right-turn lane for passing.

Passing parked vehicles: When driving past parked vehicles, watch for vehicles that may pull out in front of you. Look for clues, such as a person in the driver's seat, exhaust coming from a tailpipe, illuminated brake lights, a flashing turn signal, illuminated backup lights, or at parallel parking areas, a vehicle's front wheels turning out. Watch for a vehicle door being opened in front of you. Also, watch for pedestrians or bicyclists trying to cross the road between parked vehicles.

Passing vehicles in slow-moving traffic lanes: In some areas with a long or steep grade, a slow-moving traffic lane may be provided to allow vehicles that are unable to maintain the speed limit to travel without blocking traffic. These slower-moving vehicles should move into the designated traffic lane, allowing other vehicles to pass them in the second lane.

Freeway Driving

Freeways are our safest roads. Traffic flows in the same direction. There are no stops or intersections. Pedestrians, small motorcycles of 124 cc or less, mopeds, bicycles, all-terrain vehicles and slow-moving vehicles are not allowed on freeways.

An entrance ramp allows traffic to enter the freeway. Often, an exit ramp will be next to the entrance ramp. Look for "Do Not Enter" and "Wrong Way" signs and speed limit signs. The entrance ramp usually merges into an acceleration lane allowing you to increase your speed to match freeway traffic speed.

Signal and check for freeway traffic by using the vehicle's rearview and side-view mirrors and quick glances over your shoulder. Choose a safe space to enter and then merge into traffic, yielding the right-of-way to vehicles on the freeway. Do not count on other drivers to let you in.

- On a two-lane freeway, drive in the right lane except when passing, exiting to the left, allowing another vehicle to merge onto the freeway, when the lanes are fully occupied

with heavily congested traffic or when emergency vehicles or construction workers are on the shoulder.

- On a freeway with three or more lanes of travel in the same direction, you may drive in any lane, however, if driving at or near the minimum speed limit, drivers should stay in the lane with the slower moving traffic. A commercial vehicle with a gross vehicle weight of more than 10,000 pounds, a truck tractor or a combination vehicle with a trailer must stay in either of the two lanes farthest to the right, unless otherwise designated.
- Merge signs are placed near freeway entrances to alert you to traffic entering the freeway. Always watch for vehicles merging onto the freeway. Adjusting your speed or moving safely into another lane will allow drivers to enter the freeway smoothly and safely.
- Always watch for drivers who suddenly slow down when approaching an exit or swerve into the exit lane unexpectedly.

Leaving a freeway: Most freeway exits have a special deceleration lane to slow down in when exiting the freeway. Look ahead for exit ramp signs you want and the lane you must use. Check in front, behind and to the side for traffic. Signal your intention early and then move into the proper lane.

Avoid slowing down on the freeway when exiting. Wait until you are fully in the deceleration lane before reducing your speed and then slow down gradually. Many ramps have sharp curves, so it is important to obey the posted exit ramp speed limit.

If you miss your exit ramp, never back up, turn around or use a median crossover. Instead, drive to the next exit. Get back on the freeway and return to the exit you want. Never use the crossover lane in the median. It is only for emergency and Michigan Department of Transportation vehicles.

Fatigue: One of the greatest dangers in freeway driving is fatigue. On long trips you can become sleepy or hypnotized by the constant hum of the wind, tires and engine. If necessary, let someone else drive. Do not rely on coffee or "stay awake" drugs. If

you feel tired, stop and rest for a 10-minute break at least every two hours. Pull off the highway at the next exit. Find a motel or rest area and relax.

If you must drive, keep shifting your eyes from one area of the road to another. Keep checking the mirrors. Look at objects near and far, left and right.

Cruise control: Cruise control is best suited for use in rural areas where there is not much traffic. Set the cruise control at or below the posted speed limit. This steady pace saves gasoline and allows for acceleration to pass slower moving vehicles without blocking the left lane for extended periods. Acceleration does not cancel the cruise control setting – depressing the brake pedal will.

Using cruise control in heavy traffic, near large numbers of exit and entrance ramps or when roads are slippery from rain, snow or ice is not recommended. This could require the constant resetting of the cruise control to the point you are distracted, increasing your risk of being involved in a crash. Most vehicle manufacturers do not recommend using cruise control when towing heavy loads.

Parking Your Vehicle

Crashes sometimes occur because people did not park their vehicles properly. Whenever you park, always turn off the engine and set the parking brake. Take the keys and lock your vehicle. Do not rely on the transmission to hold your vehicle in place.

Exiting your vehicle into the street can be dangerous. Watch for bicycles, motorcycles, mopeds or other vehicles that might be passing. Check the mirrors before opening the door for traffic that may not see you. When returning to your vehicle, face oncoming traffic as you approach the driver's side.

Parking on a hill: To park on a hill, turn the tires so that if the unattended vehicle starts to roll, it moves into the curb. Always use the parking brake. You cannot expect the transmission to hold your vehicle on a hill.

Parking violations: Communities may pass parking ordinances for local streets that are stricter than state law. Signs will be posted at the city limits.

The owner of a vehicle parked illegally is responsible for any parking tickets. If the vehicle is being leased, the person leasing it is responsible. The following is a partial list of "no parking laws."

Never park:

- Where "no stopping," "no standing," "no parking," and "no parking at any time" signs are posted.
- Within 500 feet of a fire or a crash.
- Within 15 feet of a fire hydrant.
- Within 20 feet of a fire station driveway on the same side of the street or, when marked, within 75 feet of the driveway on the other side of the street.
- Within 50 feet of the nearest rail of a railroad crossing.
- In front of any driveway, alley, theater, emergency exit or fire escape.
- Next to a road where you block the view of drivers turning at an intersection.
- More than 12 inches from the curb or against the flow of traffic. This means the curb should never be more than 12 inches from your vehicle when parked.
- Within 30 feet of a stop sign, traffic light or flashing beacon, including a warning sign.
- In a lane of a highway outside city or village limits if there is a highway shoulder.
- On or under a bridge (excluding bridges with parking meters or parking spaces), on an overpass or in a tunnel.
- On a sidewalk or in front of a public or private driveway.
- Within an intersection, crosswalk or designated bike lane.
- Within 20 feet of a marked crosswalk or 15 feet of an intersection if there is no crosswalk.

- On the street-side of a legally parked vehicle (double parking).
- So that you obstruct delivery of mail to a rural mailbox.
- In a disability parking space if you don't have a disability parking placard or disability license plate.
- In a disability parking space if none of the occupants in the vehicle are disabled.
- On the blue-striped access aisle or access lane adjacent to a van-accessible disability parking space.
- In a manner that interferes with a ramp or curb cut used by people with disabilities.

Other Safety Tips

- Keep your vehicle in good working condition.
- Have your vehicle identification number etched on the car window and main parts to help prevent it from being stolen for parts.
- Alarms and interlocks to prevent other kinds of car theft can also discourage amateur carjackers.
- Tell people your route and estimated arrival time at your beginning and ending stops.
- When driving, keep doors and windows locked. Stay alert for danger. If available, take freeways rather than streets through high-crime areas.
- Close a sunroof at night and in high-risk areas.
- Do not get out to fix a flat tire. Try to drive slowly to a service station or store with a well-lighted parking lot and telephone for service.
- Choose the safest route to any destination.
- Park as close to that destination as possible.
- When returning to your car: Have your keys ready, be aware of your surroundings and of people who appear to be in the wrong place, seem suspect or whose demeanor makes you uncomfortable. Before entering the car, check the interior for possible intruders.

- In case of danger, stay inside the locked car.
- If someone acting suspiciously approaches your vehicle, try to drive away or sound the horn.
- If you are in trouble, use a mobile phone if available.
- If a carjacker wants the vehicle, give it up without a fight. A car can be replaced but personal safety is priceless. Stay calm. Get a good description of the carjackers.

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1-800-242-HEAT

Auto theft costs millions of dollars each year

To report auto theft, call the police and then call HEAT at 800-242-HEAT (4328)

Remember to:

- Park on streets or in lots that are well lit.
- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Never leave the keys in the car.
- Lock your car when you leave it.
- Keep expensive items out of sight.

Help Eliminate Auto Thefts (H.E.A.T.) is a community education and prevention program that connects citizen information with public law enforcement action to combat auto theft-related crimes in Michigan.

4 Signs, Pavement Markings and Signals

Signs, pavement markings and signals are all ways of communicating. They provide information about regulations, highway routes, directions, places of interest and cautions. They include regulatory, warning and guide signs. This chapter presents important information about signs, pavement markings and signals. Obeying signs, traffic signals and markings will help to keep you safe.

Regulatory Signs

Regulatory signs that control moving traffic are always red and white or black and white. "Wrong Way," "Do Not Enter," "Yield" and "Stop" are examples of signs with red backgrounds. Regulatory signs that control parking may be green and white.

The yield sign indicates a driver must slow down and give way to all traffic and pedestrians.

The shape of this sign indicates stop. Stop and give the right-of-way to pedestrians and all cross traffic before moving forward. You must stop behind a marked or unmarked crosswalk that joins sidewalks on opposite sides of the street, or behind a marked stop line. If there is no pavement marking or crosswalk, stop before entering the intersection where traffic coming from all directions is visible.

A red circle with a line through it always means "no," such as "no entry."

This sign means do not turn around in the middle of a street or an intersection.

These two signs are sometimes used together and mean do not pass. The yellow pennant sign will be posted on the left side of the road. The white sign will be posted on the right side.

This sign follows the do not pass sign. It is on the right side of the road. It marks the end of a no-passing zone. You may then pass when it is safe to do so.

This sign means traffic in the right lane must turn right. Traffic in the second lane should either continue driving straight or turn right. A similar sign may be used for left-turning traffic.

This sign means no right turn. If the arrow points to the left, the sign means no left turn.

This sign informs or warns not to drive across the median (divider strip) or emergency crossover of a freeway. It is against the law for anyone to cross a freeway median – except for law enforcement, emergency or maintenance vehicles. To change directions on a freeway, drive to the next exit, get off and re-enter the freeway in the other direction.

This sign directs traffic to the right of a roadway feature or an obstruction.

This sign is posted over a highway lane that is used only for making a left turn. Traffic from both directions will be using this lane. Never use a turning lane as a merge lane to pull out into traffic or to overtake and pass other vehicles.

Located at intersections, this sign means do not turn until the light turns green.

This type of sign shows the maximum speeds allowed on a freeway, weather permitting.

This sign shows the lane use for a roundabout. The left lane is for traffic traveling left and through the intersection. The right lane is for traffic traveling right and through the intersection.

Warning Signs

Exit and entrance signs at freeway ramps display the maximum recommended safe speed to drive while on the ramp under ideal weather conditions.

The following signs warn of a curve or sharp turn ahead. If the curve is too sharp to drive at the posted speed limit, an advisory speed sign is attached to indicate the fastest recommended speed in ideal weather conditions. Slow down before entering the curve.

If the speed limit is not posted before a curve, judge how sharp the curve is and change speed accordingly. If you cannot see around a curve, slow down more than normal. When driving around a curve, the vehicle will tend to move to the outside of the curve.

These signs show an upcoming side or cross road. Look for other vehicles entering or leaving the roadway.

This sign is posted where two lanes come together to form one lane.

This sign means prepare to yield ahead.

These signs mean a lane ends ahead and a driver must merge into the proper lane. However, yield the right-of-way to vehicles already in the left lane, or in the right lane in the case of a "lane ends merge right" sign.

This sign shows the road ahead has two-way traffic.

This sign indicates that a driver is approaching a roundabout intersection. When an advisory speed panel is posted below the sign, slow down to the recommended speed.

This sign warns of a steep hill. You may need to slow down at the top or change to a lower gear.

This sign cautions that a section of the road may be more slippery when weather conditions are bad. Make sure to slow down when the road is wet or icy.

This sign marks a traffic island or obstruction. Drive to either side.

This sign is used to remind drivers that they are going from a divided highway to a two-way roadway.

This sign means that school children may be crossing. Slow down and watch for them. Traffic controls near school areas may include school crosswalk lines, stop lines, curb markings, word and symbol markings, special school speed limits and school crosswalk signs.

Watch for adult crossing guards and student safety patrols helping children cross streets safely. Vehicles must stop for crossing guards with a stop sign upraised and may not continue until the crossing guard has moved completely out of the intersection.

When you see any of these warning signs, be alert for bicyclists, pedestrians or both entering or crossing the road. Drive with caution.

This sign informs or warns you that a bridge or underpass is ahead with a clearance of only 12 feet, 6 inches. Know the height of your vehicle and load.

This sign means no trucks allowed.

This sign means prepare to stop ahead.

Incident Management Signs

A traffic incident is an emergency occurrence such as a crash, a natural disaster or other unplanned event that affects or impedes the normal flow of traffic. Temporary traffic incident management warning and guide signs usually have a black legend and border on a fluorescent pink background.

These are examples of signs used to inform road users of a roadway emergency and provide guidance about driving through or around the area. Other examples of these types of signs include Detour, Exit Closed, Center Lane Closed Ahead and End Detour.

Incident management signs serve to protect responders and others involved in working at the scene and will aid in moving motorists expeditiously past or around

the traffic incident, reducing the likelihood of further traffic crashes and other problems. Local media reports about traffic incidents can also serve to alert motorists about any temporary traffic controls in effect.

Slow-Moving Vehicles

This sign on the back of a slow-moving vehicle is a warning to slow down. It means the vehicle cannot travel faster than 25 mph. Do not get impatient if behind one of these vehicles. The driver will usually try to pull over to the side whenever possible to prevent traffic back-ups.

Guide Signs

Guide signs, including those for motorist services, parks and public recreation areas, tell what is available ahead. Some show distance, destination and direction.

Route Markers

Route markers identify highways by number and symbol as part of national, state or local systems.

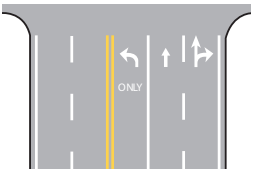
Limited-access interstate freeway sign.

U.S. highway sign.

State highway sign.

County route marker.

Pavement Markings



Pavement markings are white or yellow and, like highway signs, warn, regulate and inform drivers.

White Lines

White lines separate traffic lanes moving in the same direction. **They include:**

Broken white lines: On roadways that have more than one lane moving in one direction, broken white lines separate traffic lanes. Drive between these lines. Never straddle them. (See Figure 4-1.)

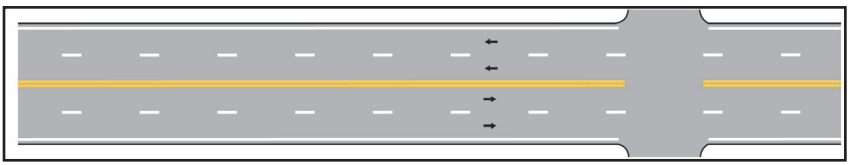
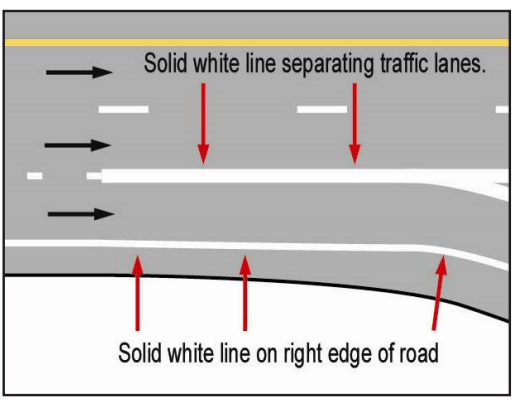


Figure 4-1

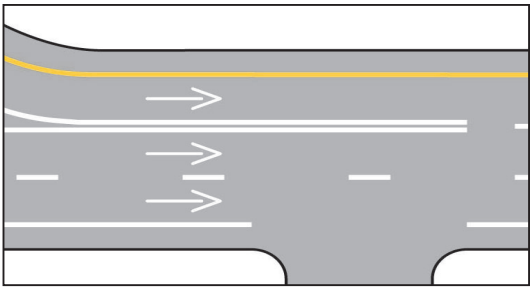
Solid white lines: Solid white lines mark the right edge of the road. Often called fog lines, solid white lines help you stay on the road at night or in bad weather. Passing to the right of another vehicle by crossing a solid white line that marks the right edge of the roadway is prohibited, even if the shoulder is paved.



Solid white lines are also used to separate lanes of traffic moving in the same direction.

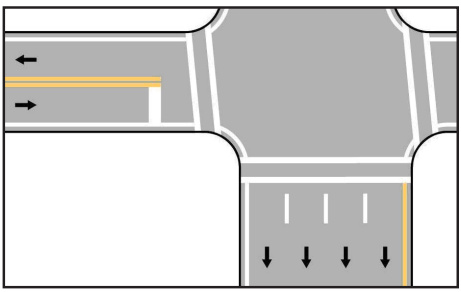
Crossing a solid white line is not recommended. These white lines may designate sharp curves, freeway acceleration and deceleration lanes and other parts of the road where lane changes are considered dangerous.

A **double solid white line** is used to show a travel path where driving in the same direction is permitted on both sides of the line but crossing the line is prohibited.



Lines for Safety Reasons

These lines separate traffic for safety reasons, such as bicycle ways, pedestrian ways or where one lane of traffic is usually traveling at a higher speed than the other lane.



Crosswalk lines: Solid white lines mark many pedestrian crosswalks. They are painted all the way across the pavement. Crosswalks are also indicated by white stripes placed on the road in the direction of traffic. Crosswalks are placed at intersections and sometimes between intersections. Stop the vehicle behind the crosswalk line.

Stop lines: Wide white lines painted across a traffic lane mark where you must stop your vehicle at intersections. This keeps the vehicle out of the way of pedestrians and cross traffic. If there are no stop lines or crosswalks, stop the vehicle before entering the intersection. Whether or not there is a stop line, make sure you are able to see traffic from all directions before proceeding.

Directional arrows: Wide white arrows painted down the center of the traffic lane indicate the direction that the vehicle must travel. In the graphic provided, the arrow pointing to the right indicates that all vehicles in this lane must turn right. The next lane may go straight or turn right. Always check for traffic and pedestrians before proceeding or completing your turn. (See Figure 4-2.)

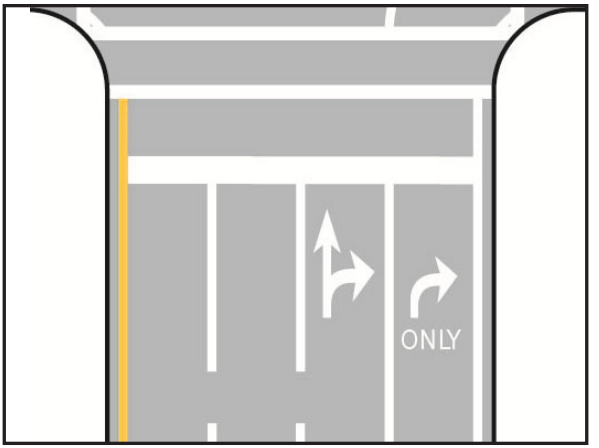


Figure 4-2

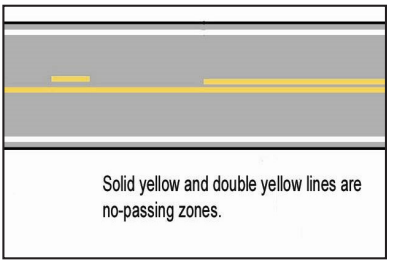
Bicycle lanes: A bicycle lane is a portion of the roadway with pavement markings and signs exclusively for bicyclists. This lane shall not be used by motorists as a driving lane or for parking.

Sharrows: Sharrows are pavement markings that assist bicyclists in determining the appropriate line of travel. They also alert motorists that bicyclists may be traveling in that lane and to pass with sufficient clearance.

Yellow Lines

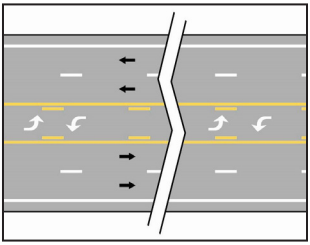
Yellow lines separate traffic lanes moving in opposite directions. They include solid, broken and center-lane lines.

Broken yellow lines: A single broken yellow line usually marks the center line of a two-way roadway where a vehicle may pass if it is safe.



Solid yellow lines: If a solid yellow line is on your side of the center line, do not cross it to pass. On a four-lane divided roadway or a one-way road, a solid yellow line usually marks the left edge of the pavement. A double solid yellow

line down the middle of a two-lane roadway means that passing is not allowed for vehicles traveling in either direction.



Center lane, left-turn-only: Many roads have a center left-turn only lane to help traffic flow more smoothly. Each outside edge of this lane is marked with a solid yellow line with broken yellow lines on the inside edges. Left turns must be made from within this lane and may be made from either direction. Using this lane to pass other vehicles or as a merge lane is both dangerous and illegal.

Yield Lines

Yield lines are typically found at roundabout intersections and mid-block crosswalks and help regulate the flow of traffic. When yielding to traffic or pedestrians, make sure to stop behind the yield lines. There are two types of yield lines:

White triangular symbols: White triangles painted across a traffic lane mean be ready to stop and yield to traffic. (See Figure 4-3.)

Dashed white lines: Dashed white lines painted across a roundabout's traffic lane indicate you should yield to traffic. (See Figure 4-4.)

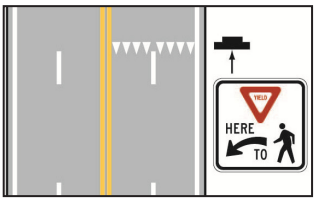


Figure 4-3

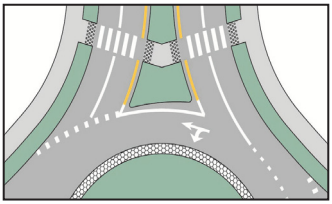
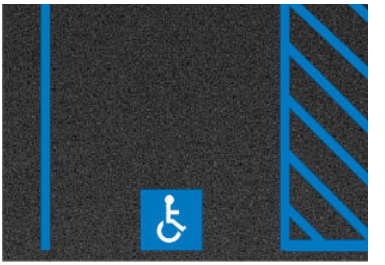


Figure 4-4

Van-accessible Disability Parking Spaces

Van-accessible parking: Van-accessible parking spaces are wider than standard parking spaces. This provides space for the van's wheelchair lift and ramp, allowing the person with a disability room

to exit and enter the vehicle. For this reason, it is extremely important not to park on the blue-striped area of the van-accessible parking space. Doing so may prevent the person with a disability from getting in or out of the vehicle.



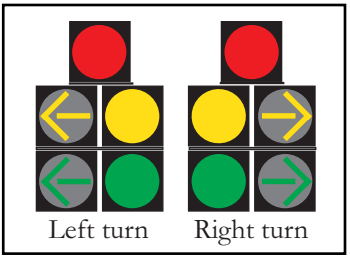
Traffic Control Signals

Traffic signals control traffic at intersections. It is illegal to drive across public or private property, such as a store parking lot, to avoid a traffic-control device. Combinations of traffic signals, signs, pavement markings and other traffic-control devices may be used at railroad crossings, schools, street and highway construction and maintenance operations. Pedestrian signals control pedestrian traffic. Always give the right-of-way to pedestrians.

Traffic signals: A **red light** means stop. It is at the top of a traffic signal in Michigan. Stop the vehicle behind a crosswalk or stop line. A **yellow light** means the green signal has ended and the signal is about to turn red. You are required to stop on a yellow light. If you cannot stop safely, do not speed up but drive cautiously through the intersection. A **green light** means proceed cautiously after checking for pedestrians and vehicles. If a traffic light is not working at an intersection, and there are no law enforcement officers or alternate traffic signal devices present to control the flow of traffic, you should follow the basic right-of-way rules. These include yielding to vehicles that reach the intersection before you, to those on your right if you reach the intersection at the same time, and when turning left, giving right-of-way to oncoming traffic.

The 5-section head signal: The 5-section head signal or "doghouse signal" is used to regulate left or right turns at intersections. This type of signal has red, green and yellow lights along with a yellow and a green turn arrow. When the green arrow is lit, turning drivers have a "protected turn," meaning all oncoming or

conflicting traffic is stopped. When the green light is lit, turning drivers may complete their turn when oncoming traffic has cleared.



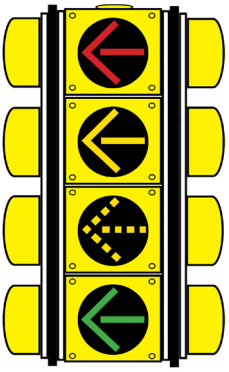
When either the yellow light or yellow arrow is lit, the signal is about to change to red and drivers must stop if they have not already entered the intersection or cannot safely stop. If they have already entered the intersection, they must proceed through their turn with caution after making sure traffic is clear.

A flashing red light means come to a full stop. Proceed when the road is clear.

A flashing yellow light means proceed carefully through the intersection. Scan across traffic in both directions.

A steady green arrow means you may proceed with caution in the direction of the arrow if the way is clear. Yield the right-of-way to pedestrians in the intersection. Traffic coming toward you should stop.

Research from the Federal Highway Administration shows that by reconfiguring the signal arrows used for left turns, traffic moves more efficiently through intersections and the chances for crashes are reduced.



The **flashing yellow arrow left-turn signal head** has four separate lenses. The lens at the top is a solid red arrow. The next signal below it is a solid yellow arrow, then a flashing yellow arrow, and finally, a solid green arrow at the bottom. Each arrow specifies

what actions are permitted. This signal will be standard throughout the United States.

A solid red arrow means you must stop. You cannot turn until the signal changes.

A solid yellow arrow warns you that the left turn signal is about to change to red. If you are approaching the intersection, you must stop. However, if you are already within the intersection and there is no conflicting traffic present, you may complete your left turn.

A flashing yellow arrow allows you to turn left when oncoming traffic, which has a green light, is clear. Be sure that there is an adequate gap in the oncoming traffic and that there are no pedestrians or bicyclists crossing before making your turn.

A solid green arrow indicates that oncoming traffic is stopped and you may turn left. Proceed with caution. At intersections equipped with vehicle-detection cameras or in-pavement sensors, this sequence may be skipped if there are no left-turning vehicles.

Traffic Control Systems for Railroad Crossings

Traffic control systems for railroad crossings include all signs, signals, markings and illuminated devices that permit safe and efficient movement of both rail and highway traffic. Be cautious, an approaching train is closer and moving faster than it appears. Trains cannot stop at railroad crossings. It is much harder and takes much longer for a train to stop, up to a mile in most cases. It could be fatal to ignore a signal or try to cross in front of a train. Whether you are on foot, on a bicycle or in a vehicle, cross railroad tracks only at designated crossings. It is dangerous and illegal to walk down the tracks.

When approaching a railroad crossing that does not have a signal or a gate, slow down and look both ways. This is good advice even if a signal crossing does not indicate a train is coming.

Railroad crossing: This sign warns of a railroad crossing ahead. If a train is coming, all

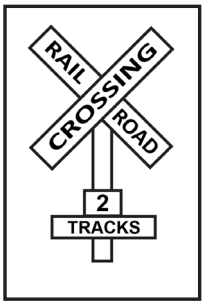
vehicles must stop no more than 50 feet or less than 15 feet from the tracks. Trains overhang the tracks by at least three feet on each side.

If there is more than one set of tracks, check carefully for other trains that may be coming. Do not cross the tracks until all trains have passed. When the road is snow covered, proceed over tracks with enough speed so you will not get stuck. Avoid changing gears while crossing the tracks.

When you see devices that warn of railroad crossings and possible oncoming trains:

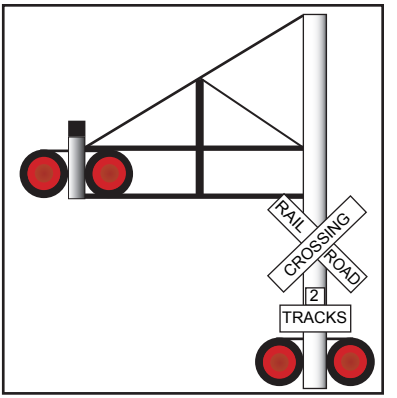
- Slow down and be ready to stop.
- School buses, vehicles carrying passengers for hire, gasoline trucks and other vehicles carrying hazardous materials must stop and make sure no train is coming, even if there is no stop sign or railroad crossing signal.
- If there is a stop sign at the crossing, you must stop whether or not a train is coming.
- Be careful not to get "trapped" on railroad tracks by a line of traffic backed up by a signal.
- If your vehicle becomes hung up on or stalls on the tracks, get everyone out of the vehicle and as far away from the tracks as possible, even if you do not see an approaching train. Notify authorities by calling 911, the local law enforcement or the emergency number posted at the crossing.

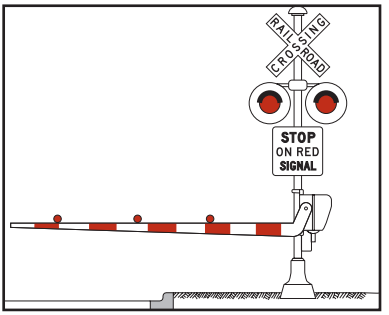
Passive railroad crossings. Passive railroad crossings do not have flashing lights or gates to warn of approaching trains. Instead, they use crossing signs, pavement markings or crossbucks located just before or at a railroad crossing to alert drivers to look for trains. For example, this railroad sign identifies the location and number of railroad tracks.



Slow down or stop as necessary and yield to any rail traffic. Do not cross without checking the track in both directions for a train. Be sure all tracks are clear before proceeding and never race a train in an attempt to cross ahead of it.

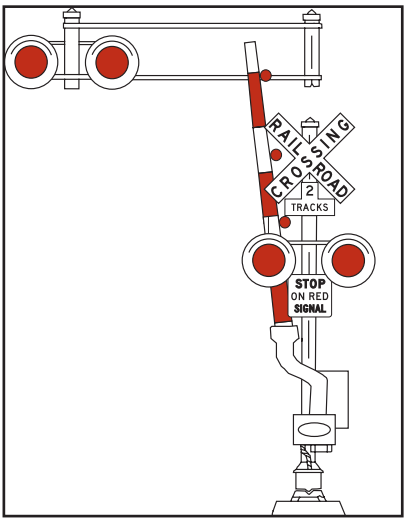
Active railroad control systems inform road users of the presence of a train. These systems may include combinations of gates, flashing-light signals, message signs and bells or other audible warning devices.





Post-mounted and overhead flashing-light signals may be used separately or in combination with each other. They may also be used without automatic gates.

This active railroad control system has overhead and post-mounted flashing lights and an automatic gate.



No matter what system you encounter:

- Stop when the bells are ringing, the lights are flashing or the gate is down or in motion.
- Do not drive through, around or under any railroad crossing system.
- Once the train has passed, do not proceed until the gates are raised, signals stop flashing, bells stop ringing and you are sure that all tracks are clear.

Warning Signs for Construction and Maintenance

Warning signs in construction, maintenance or other designated work areas are diamond-shaped with black lettering on an orange or yellow background.

A combination of signs, signals, lighting devices, markings, barricades, routing and hand-signaling devices may be used around road construction, utility work and maintenance and surveying operations.

Construction and maintenance signs may mean part of a lane, an entire lane or the whole road is blocked. These signs are also used when work is being done adjacent to the roadway, on shoulders or in ditch areas.

Construction zones can be for a short period of time, or last one or more construction seasons. Drivers are made aware of such zones by signs posted in advance.

Watch for warning sign messages and obey them as directed. Drive defensively to avoid problems. Be patient and everyone will travel through construction zones safely. Look carefully for construction workers or moving equipment.

Construction workers also have the authority to direct traffic in work zones and their directions should be followed even if they conflict with an existing traffic control device.

When going through a designated work area, pay attention to the posted speed limits. For most construction, maintenance or surveying activities, the speed limit is 45 mph unless posted differently. Work zones may limit speeds to 45 mph where workers are present, yet allow traffic to return to the normally posted speed when workers are absent. This allows traffic to move at full speed when safe to do so while requiring motorists to watch for workers and slow down when construction in a work zone is active.

Fines are doubled for all moving violations in work zones. In addition, motorists caught speeding in construction zones face increased points on their driving records.

Under the law, motorists will be assessed:

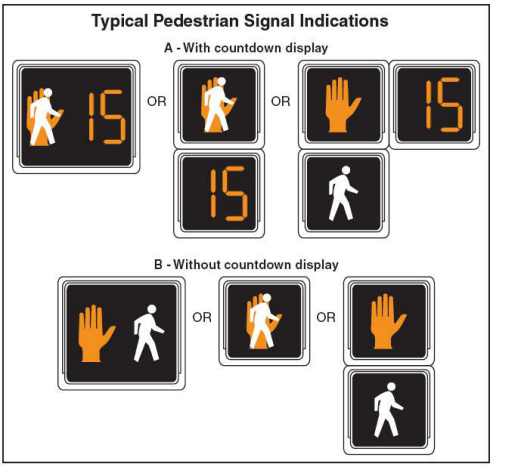
- 3 points for speeding 10 mph or less over the posted limit.
- 4 points for speeding more than 10 mph but not more than 15 mph over the limit.
- 5 points for speeding more than 15 mph over the limit.

Motorists who have accumulated 12 or more points in a two-year period will be required to undergo a driver assessment reexamination.

Motorists causing injury or death to any person in a work zone are subject to fines of up to $7,500 and imprisonment of up to 15 years.

Pedestrian Signals

Pedestrian signals are used to control the movement of people at specific crossing points along the road or at an intersection. The white symbol of a walking person means to "walk," and a red upraised hand means "do not walk." Some use the words "WALK" and "DONT WALK."

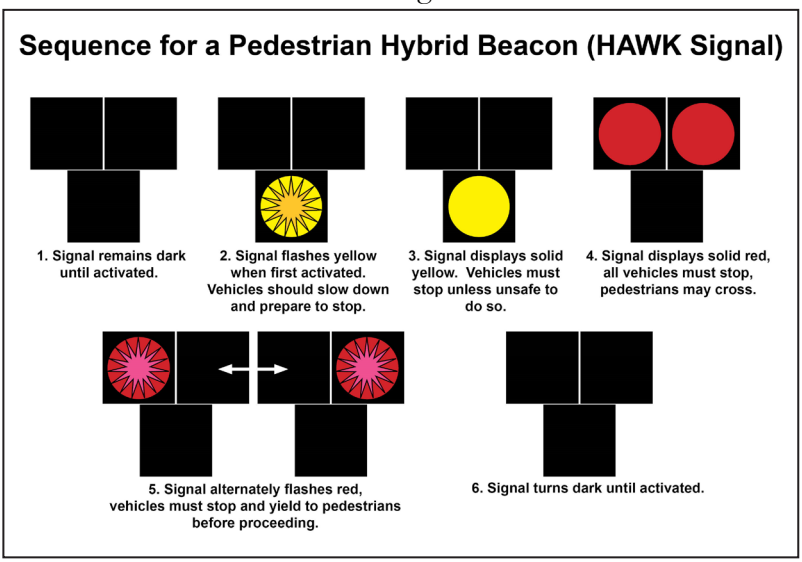


Pedestrian signals may include an audible or visual "countdown" indicating how much time is left before the signal changes. Do not start crossing a road when either the upraised hand or the DONT

WALK images are flashing. If you are partway across and the signal changes to a flashing mode, complete your crossing. Drivers should be cautious, especially if turning, when pedestrians are present.

Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon signals (known as "HAWK" signals) are a crossing device to alert drivers to the presence of pedestrians. There are six steps to the HAWK signal sequence.

1. **Dark** – The signal stays dark until activated by a pedestrian. Proceed with caution when the signal is dark.
2. **Flashing Yellow** – The signal will flash yellow once it is activated. Slow down and be prepared to stop.
3. **Steady Yellow** – Stop. If it is unsafe to stop, proceed with caution.
4. **Solid Red** – Stop and remain stopped.
5. **Alternately Flashing Red** – Stop and proceed only when clear.
6. **Dark** – Signal sequence is completed and HAWK signal turns dark until activated again.



5 Sharing the Road Safely – Be Courteous!

Drivers of all ages need to be concerned with traffic laws, courtesy and safety. This chapter reminds you that you share the road with a variety of traffic such as commercial trucks, emergency vehicles, motorcycles, mopeds, bicyclists and pedestrians. It is important to be patient with all who use the road. The material presented here also will help you understand how to drive in a manner that reduces the risk of a traffic crash and the risk of road rage.

Safe driving involves more than learning the basics of operating a vehicle and memorizing the rules of the road. Safe driving also requires good judgment and reflexes, experience, patience and common sense. A young driver's understanding and judgment may not be as well developed as an experienced driver's. Middle-aged drivers may grow complacent about their driving ability after years of driving. Older drivers have years of experience on the road but may face challenges brought about by losses in vision, hearing, attentiveness, decision-making ability or reaction time. Research indicates older drivers can improve their driving ability through additional training, enabling them to maintain their driver's license while driving safely. Some communities offer driving skill programs for older drivers.

Distracted Driving

The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that there are at least 3,000 deaths annually from distracted-driving crashes – crashes in which drivers lost focus on the safe control of their vehicles due to manual, visual or cognitive distraction.

While this statistic is significant, it may understate the size of the problem since identifying the distraction and its role in a crash can be difficult.

Most drivers understand the responsibility of getting behind the wheel and avoiding risky behaviors. Distracted drivers who drive "in a careless or negligent manner likely to endanger any person or property" or "in willful or wanton disregard for the safety of persons or property" are subject to prosecution under Michigan law.

Texting while driving is illegal in Michigan and this includes reading, typing or sending a text message. Exceptions are in place for reporting crashes, crimes or other emergencies. Drivers face a fine of $100 for a first offense and $200 for subsequent violations.

Anything that takes your eyes off the road, your hands off the wheel or your mind off your driving can be a big problem. Studies show that your brain cannot give full attention to more than one activity at a time. Even seemingly simple tasks such as tuning a radio can be risky, especially in bad weather or heavy traffic. In the estimated quarter of a second it takes the brain to shift attention between two tasks, a car going 65 mph covers 24 feet.

Here are some ways you can minimize in-vehicle distractions.

Before driving:

- Designate a front-seat passenger to serve as a "copilot" to help with maps or navigation systems. If you are driving alone, map out destinations in advance.
- Be familiar with equipment in the vehicle. Practice performing basic functions such as adjusting the temperature or radio settings without taking your eyes off the road.
- Preprogram your favorite radio stations for easy access and arrange tapes and CDs in an easy-to-reach spot.
- Ensure all children are comfortable and properly buckled up. Teach them the importance of good behavior and remaining buckled up while in a vehicle. Do not underestimate how distracting it can be to tend to them in the car.
- Complete any personal grooming before you start driving or after you reach your destination.

While driving:

- Make driving your priority. A momentary distraction can lead to a crash. Keep your hands on the wheel and your eyes on the road.
- Avoid using mobile phones, texting devices, navigation systems and other electronic gadgets.
- If you must use a mobile phone, make your call while your vehicle is safely parked. Avoid calling others who are driving.
- Do not take notes, read or look up phone numbers.
- Avoid involved, stressful or confrontational conversations.
- If you must eat, choose easy-to-handle items and make sure drinks are secured in cup holders.
- Take a break if you find yourself "lost in thought" or tired.

Sharing the Road

When driving, you'll share the road with pedestrians, bicyclists, trucks, farm tractors, road repair and snow removal equipment to mention a few.

Keep the following guidelines in mind when driving:

- Be alert and use extra care when sharing the road with pedestrians, bicycles, motorcycles and mopeds. They are small and hard to see. Keep in mind that children are especially unpredictable in their movements and may be hard to spot due to their small size.
- Watch for delivery and commercial vehicles that make frequent stops. Allow more following distance than usual.
- Check your mirrors and look over your shoulder for traffic when pulling out from curb-side parking or driveways.
- Be alert and listen for all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles and watch for trail or crosswalk signs along the roadway.

Pedestrians

As a driver, watch out and always yield the right-of-way to people walking, jogging, biking, crossing a street in the middle of a block or darting from between parked vehicles. Watch for them when

entering a street from a driveway or alley, at stop signs, traffic signals, roundabouts, crosswalks and intersections.

Take extra care when people with disabilities are crossing the road. Be on high-alert for children entering the street when driving near schools, playgrounds or residential neighborhoods.

After a traffic light turns green, yield to people crossing a street or vehicles that may still be turning in front of you or crossing the intersection. Even if traffic lights or crosswalks are not present, drivers must still yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian crossing the roadway. Never attempt to pass any vehicle that has stopped to allow a pedestrian to cross. Drivers must take every possible precaution to avoid a collision with pedestrians.

Motorists are cautioned that pedestrians are likely to cross in the middle of the block, whether or not a crosswalk is present.

Mid-block crosswalks provide pedestrians with safe crossing along roadways at places other than intersections. (See Figure 5-1.) A yield line is sometimes used to indicate the location where drivers should stop for pedestrians in the crosswalk.

When there are no sidewalks, pedestrians should walk on the side of the road facing oncoming traffic. Parents should teach their children this, but drivers must watch for pedestrians.

Be alert for joggers running along roadways. Joggers should wear reflective clothing, use sidewalks or roadway shoulders and avoid jogging at night, dawn, dusk or during bad weather. Joggers, like other pedestrians, should be on the side of the road facing oncoming traffic.

Blind pedestrians: Michigan law requires you to stop or yield the right-of-way when you see a pedestrian with a white cane or guide dog. Only the blind may carry white canes. Avoid honking the horn or revving the engine; these noises are distracting and cover important audible cues used by the blind. Also avoid blocking designated crosswalks. This makes it especially difficult for a visually impaired or blind person to cross the street. It is also an inconvenience for

others attempting to cross and violates the rule of always yielding to pedestrians.

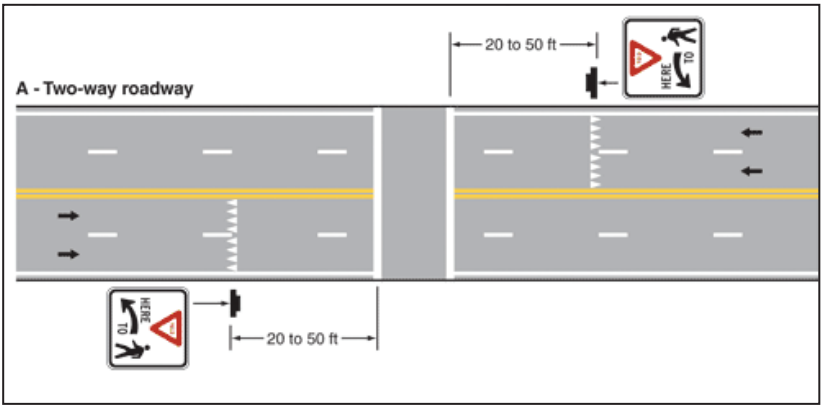


Figure 5-1 – Mid-block Crosswalk

Emergency Vehicles

Yield the right-of-way to an emergency vehicle that is approaching from any direction or has stopped when it is displaying flashing warning lights or sounding a siren or other audible warning or both.

An authorized emergency vehicle includes:

- Ambulances, fire department and police vehicles, privately owned vehicles of volunteer or paid fire fighters if authorized by the chief of an organized fire department, privately owned motor vehicles of volunteer or paid members of a life-support agency.
- A vehicle owned and operated by a federally recognized, nonprofit charitable organization that is used exclusively for assistance during that emergency.
- A tow truck or wrecker with a flashing, rotating or oscillating red or amber light that is clearly marked and readily recognizable as a vehicle used to assist disabled vehicles.

Failure to yield or exercise due caution when passing a stopped emergency vehicle is a misdemeanor. In addition, it is a felony to injure or kill emergency personnel for failure to yield or exercise due caution when passing a stationary emergency vehicle.

When you see a stopped emergency vehicle:

- Slow down and move over a lane if possible. If traffic or other conditions prevent you from changing lanes, you must slow down and proceed with due caution.

When an emergency vehicle is approaching:

- Pull over to the edge of the roadway, clear of intersections and stop.
- Remain there until the emergency vehicle has passed. Stay alert – more than one emergency vehicle may be responding to the call.
- Keep a foot on the brake so the brake lights let emergency vehicle drivers know you have stopped.
- Stay at least 500 feet behind any moving emergency vehicle displaying flashing warning lights and sounding a siren.
- Never pass a moving emergency vehicle displaying flashing warning lights unless directed to do so by the emergency vehicle driver or a law enforcement officer.

Commercial Vehicles

When a commercial vehicle such as a truck or a bus collides with smaller vehicles, people in the smaller vehicles are much more likely to be severely injured or killed.

Motorists should understand the following about commercial vehicles:

- Commercial vehicle drivers cannot stop or maneuver their vehicles as easily as a passenger vehicle. They take longer to stop. A passenger vehicle traveling at 55 mph can stop in about 130 feet to 140 feet. A commercial vehicle traveling at the same speed takes 400 feet to stop.
- Commercial vehicle drivers may not be able to see traffic directly in front of, alongside or close behind their vehicles.

Large commercial trucks have blind spots or "no zones," spaces in which motorists should not linger because they are not readily visible to the commercial driver. By hanging out in a commercial vehicle's "no zones," you are essentially hidden from the truck driver and this increases the chances that the truck could hit you when it is changing lanes or turning. These "no zones" are in the front, behind and on both sides of the commercial vehicle. Stay out of the "no zones." (See Figure 5-2.)

- Commercial vehicles need room to make right turns. They may swing wide to the left to safely negotiate a right turn. When you see a commercial vehicle with its right turn signal on at an intersection, know that the truck is going to make a wide right turn. Do not try to pass on the right-hand side or you might get squeezed between the truck and the curb. Stay behind trucks making right turns.

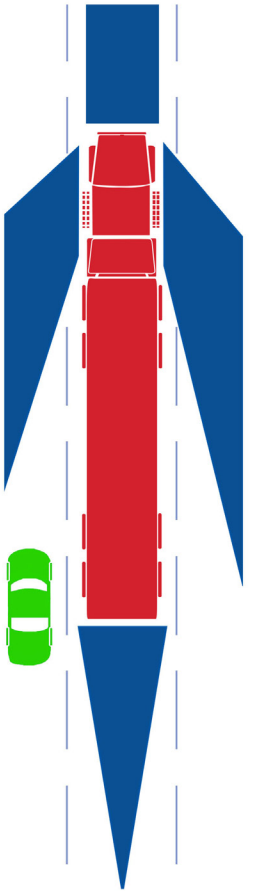


Figure 5-2
"No zones" shown in blue.

These factors are the result of size and weight differences between the two types of vehicles, but vehicle size and weight do not cause crashes – drivers do.

Remember to:

- Keep a safe distance behind a truck or bus. Following a commercial vehicle too closely greatly increases the chances of a rear-end collision. When your passenger vehicle is right behind a commercial vehicle, the driver cannot see it and it severely limits what you can see on the road ahead. Extend

the distance between your vehicle and a commercial vehicle as weather or road conditions deteriorate.

- When following a commercial vehicle, observe its turn signals before trying to pass. Cutting in between a commercial vehicle and the curb or shoulder to the right may result in a crash. If the commercial vehicle appears to be starting a left turn, wait and verify which way the driver is signaling before passing on the right.
- Signal intended lane changes or turns well in advance. Never cut off a commercial vehicle, force it to slow down or stop suddenly.
- Be careful when passing a commercial vehicle. Often, commercial vehicle drivers cannot see you. Allow enough time and distance to pass safely.
- Roundabouts: Try not to pass or drive next to large vehicles.
- Pass commercial vehicles on the left side and maintain a consistent speed when passing. Be sure you can see the entire cab of the truck in your rearview mirror before signaling and pulling in front of the commercial vehicle.
- When passing a commercial vehicle or when one passes you, keep both hands on the steering wheel. Trucks can create strong air flow and draft when traveling at high speeds.
- Never cross behind a commercial vehicle that is preparing to back up or is backing up. Remember, most trailers are eight-and-a-half feet wide and can hide a car completely, preventing the truck driver from even seeing your vehicle.
- Stay behind the white stopping lines. They are there for a reason. If you stop past the line, commercial vehicles will not be able to complete their turns without hitting you.
- When merging onto the freeway, commercial vehicles may not be able to move over, so match the flow of traffic as closely as possible, pick your spot and go.
- When exiting the freeway, leave space between you and the vehicle in front of you. Plan your move early and always signal your intentions as soon as possible.

- Be even more careful passing a truck with a trailer. Often, a driver must swing out to the left or right before making a turn. The driver may not see you and could force you off the road.
- Slow down if a truck or bus is passing you, especially during bad weather. Splash or spray from their tires can reduce visibility. Start your wipers before the vehicle passes.
- At night, use your low beams when following a truck or bus.

Motorcycles, Mopeds and Bicycles

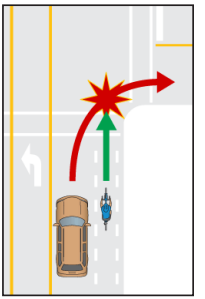
Motorists should keep a sharp eye out for motorcyclists, moped riders and bicyclists. While their smaller size may make these two-wheeled and (for some motorcycles) three-wheeled vehicles economical to operate, it also makes it difficult to judge their speed and distance, putting them at an increased risk of being hit. Any crash between a larger vehicle and a motorcyclist, moped rider or bicyclist almost always injures or kills the operator of the smaller vehicle.

When driving, remember these important points about motorcycles, mopeds and bicycles:

- Always treat motorcyclists, moped riders and bicyclists with courtesy. Bicyclists may legally ride on Michigan roads, except limited access freeways, and have the same rights and responsibilities as other motorists.
- It is illegal to drive beside a motorcyclist, moped rider or bicyclist in the same lane. But, two motorcyclists, moped riders or bicyclists may drive side by side in the same lane.
- Intersections are one of the most common locations for crashes between vehicles and motorcyclists, moped riders or bicyclists. Exercise extreme caution when making a left turn at an intersection. Be alert for possible oncoming motorcyclists, moped riders and bicyclists. Left turns present a higher risk for crashes because it is easy for motorists to overlook oncoming motorcyclists, moped riders or bicyclists due to their smaller profile and speed.

- Pass a motorcyclist, moped rider or bicyclist as you would another vehicle, but not so fast or so close that your tires throw dirt or stones into the rider's face or that a draft from your vehicle blows the motorcycle, moped or bicycle about. Never attempt to squeeze by the rider. A good rule when passing a bicyclist is to allow at least three feet of space between your side mirror and the rider. Five feet of space is recommended for higher speed roads or if a group of riders is present. Large vehicles should allow even more space when passing.
- Before changing lanes, check to see if a motorcyclist, moped rider or bicyclist is in your blind spot or in the space where you plan to move. After you pass, look again before you move back into the other lane. Make sure you can see the rider clearly in your rearview mirror. Many crashes happen because motorists failed to check their blind spots and didn't see the motorcyclist, moped rider or bicyclist.
- Leave plenty of extra space between your vehicle and a motorcyclist, moped rider or bicyclist ahead. They can usually stop in shorter distances than a car and may have to swerve suddenly to avoid obstacles.
- Allow extra maneuvering room in areas with potholes, pavement transitions and railroad crossings. Motorcyclists, moped riders or bicyclists may need to slow down, stop or adjust their lane position to avoid hazards.
- A fast moving vehicle creates a lot of airflow and draft around it. Be mindful that your vehicle's "wind blast" can startle or even push a motorcyclist, moped rider or bicyclist off balance, increasing the chances of a crash.
- Check for turn signals or hand signals from a motorcyclist, moped rider or bicyclist. Not all of their vehicles are equipped with turn signals. Watch for other clues as to whether the vehicle intends to turn, such as the operator and passenger turning their heads to look behind or beginning to lean or tilt their vehicle.

- The single headlight or taillight on a motorcycle, moped or bicycle can blend into the lights of other vehicles.
- When parking your vehicle, check your mirrors before opening your door. Opening a vehicle door in the path of approaching traffic, including motorcyclists, moped riders and bicyclists, is dangerous and illegal.
- Use your horn judiciously. Avoid loud blasts that may startle riders and put them at an increased risk of a crash.
- Look for bicyclists riding from behind on the road shoulder or in a bike lane before turning right at an intersection, into a driveway or pulling off the road. As appropriate, yield and allow them to pass before turning. Do not overtake a bicyclist and turn right unless it is safe to do so.
- Obey all lane markings. Do not use a bicycle lane as a passing or turning lane.



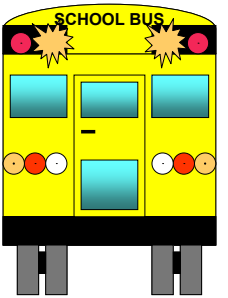
School Buses

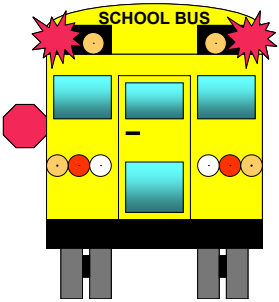
It is not necessary to stop for a school bus stopped on the other side of a divided highway where the road is separated by a barrier, such as a concrete or grass median, island or other structures that separate the flow of traffic. Use extra care around buses and in school zones. Children are small and hard to see and may dart into the street or out from around parked vehicles.

Fines for failing to stop for a school bus are double what would normally be assessed for a moving violation. Increased fines and imprisonment may result for violations resulting in injury or death.

When the YELLOW overhead lights are flashing:

- When the yellow overhead lights are flashing, prepare to stop.



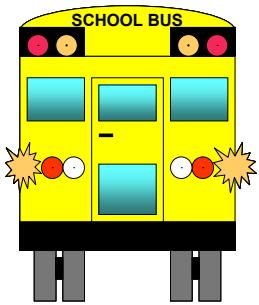


When the RED overhead lights are flashing :

- When the red overhead lights are flashing, stop at least 20 feet from the school bus.
- Remain stopped until the flashing red lights are turned off or the bus resumes its travels.

When the YELLOW hazard lights are flashing:

- When the yellow hazard lights are flashing, proceed with caution.



Aggressive Driving

Watch for aggressive drivers. Aggressive drivers run stop signs and red lights, speed, tailgate, weave their vehicles in and out of traffic, pass on the right and may make improper hand gestures. They sometimes yell at you, honk their horns or flash their headlights. If you respond equally, the situation may get out of control and escalate into road rage, in which a weapon or the vehicle itself is used to assault the other driver.

Aggressive drivers' actions place them and other motorists at an increased risk for crashes. We have all seen aggressive drivers. They disregard their own safety as well as that of others. Do not be an aggressive driver. Be courteous and aware of the traffic around you. Take a moment to think about the driving behaviors that bother you and to assess your own driving. If the driving behaviors that upset you are also present in your own driving, then there is a chance that your driving could be upsetting to other drivers.

The exact number of traffic crashes caused by aggressive drivers is unknown, but the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

has estimated 66 percent of all traffic fatalities are caused by aggressive driving behaviors.

Avoid the following behaviors:

- **Merging improperly**. Failing to merge smoothly disrupts the flow of traffic. Always try to merge smoothly when entering the expressway or turning from one road to another. If you see a driver making an ill-advised merge or turn, slow down and give him or her room. Getting angry will not help and your anger could adversely affect your judgment, resulting in a crash. A driver may be wrong, but how important is it to prove you are right? Do not risk injury or death because you feel you have been wronged when driving. It is much wiser to back off and allow the driver to merge.
- **Driving slowly in the left lane**. Use all lanes properly and obey the speed limit. If you are using the left-hand lane to pass slower traffic and someone tailgates you, move back into the right-hand lane when it is safe to do so and allow the faster traffic to move ahead. Driving in the left-hand lane and allowing traffic to build up behind you increases the chances aggressive drivers may take careless risks attempting to get around you.
- **Tailgating**. This is another aggressive-driver trait. If other drivers tailgate you, pull over and let them pass. It is better to have these unsafe drivers in front where you can see them rather than having them driving on your rear bumper.
- **Gestures**. Never gesture at other drivers when you become angry. If another driver is gesturing to you when you have made a driving error, let him or her know you are sorry. Everyone makes mistakes. Returning gestures or becoming angry will not correct your mistake. It will only serve to make both of you angrier and increase the risk of confrontation or a traffic crash.

Always remember that safe driving is affected by your driving attitude and your ability to control your stress and anger. Do not let

an aggressive driver's behaviors provoke you to the point where you feel compelled to react in kind. If confronted by an aggressive driver, attempt to get out of the way, avoid eye contact and ignore gestures or verbal attacks. If safe to do so, call the police and report the aggressive driver. Also, if an aggressive driver is involved in a crash farther down the road, stop a safe distance from the crash scene, wait for the police to arrive and report the driving behavior witnessed.

6 Emergencies and Special Situations

This chapter suggests ways to handle emergencies and special situations. Remember, driving requires complete attention. Unexpected events can happen very quickly, leaving little time to react. Plan ahead.

Remember These Important Safety Tips

- Never stop on a freeway except for an emergency. If you must stop, turn on the emergency hazard flashers, slow down gradually and pull all the way off the pavement as soon as safely possible.
- When stopped, always be alert for approaching and passing vehicles and stay well off the roadway. Raise the hood, tie a handkerchief on the antenna, driver-side door handle or mirror, then lock the doors and wait for assistance. If you must leave your vehicle, close the hood and lock the vehicle.
- When traveling alone or with children at night, it may be a good idea to stay in the vehicle with windows closed and doors locked. It is dangerous and illegal to walk on a freeway.
- If your vehicle's hood opens while driving, slow down and look through the windshield between the hood and dashboard or out the window for a place to stop safely.
- If your accelerator sticks and you need to stop suddenly, shift to neutral and apply steady pressure to the brakes. Otherwise, shift to neutral, check for traffic, steer off the roadway, apply the brakes and come to a stop. Turn off the ignition and correct the problem before proceeding.
- Keep an emergency safety kit in your vehicle. Make sure to include jumper cables, mobile phone charger, shovel, tow

rope, sand or kitty litter, flashlight and batteries, first-aid kit, emergency flares, battery operated radio, nonperishable food (energy bars and water), small tool kit (including duct tape), blanket and maps.

- Use a flashlight, flares or warning triangles to warn other drivers of a disabled vehicle at night. Put flares at least 100 feet behind the vehicle at the side of the road. For added protection, place some more flares beside and 100 feet ahead of the vehicle.
- Never turn the ignition to the "lock" position while your vehicle is in motion. This will cause the steering to lock. Once the steering locks, if you try to turn the steering wheel, you will lose control of the vehicle.
- Never leave keys in the car or ignition.
- Make sure you have enough gas to get to your destination.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Is there a police or fire station, service station or other business open nearby if you should need help?
- Do not hitchhike or pick up hitchhikers.

Braking

Under normal conditions, you apply a steady, firm push on the brake pedal to slow and stop your vehicle.

In extreme conditions, such as on snow, ice or in an emergency stop on dry pavement, how you brake depends on your braking system.

With antilock brakes, apply the brake with hard, firm pressure from the start and maintain this pressure until you have stopped. You may feel or hear vibrations or pulsations, this is normal.

In a vehicle without antilock brakes, apply the brakes just hard enough to not lock the wheels. If the wheels do lock, release pressure and apply the brakes again. This method of braking is sometimes referred to as "threshold" or "controlled" braking.

Skids

When driving on snow or a slippery road, slow down gradually. Test the vehicle's brakes lightly to get a feel for the road. Most skids happen when a driver tries to turn too quickly or stop suddenly on slippery pavement.

To prevent a skid in vehicles with standard brakes, use steady pressure on the brakes without locking them. This method allows the wheels to turn, maintaining steering control. If the vehicle has full antilock brakes, maintain brake pressure and steer.

If the vehicle begins to skid, remain calm and do the following:

- Take your foot off the accelerator.
- Turn the front wheels only enough to keep them pointed in the direction you want to go and no farther.
- Be prepared for a secondary skid in the opposite direction.
- Again, turn the wheels in the direction you want to go. Then straighten the wheels to bring the vehicle under control.

Driving in Bad Weather

Preventive maintenance prior to the winter season is the best way to ensure safe travel. Regularly check fluid levels such as power steering, brake, windshield washer and oil.

Make sure the antifreeze is strong enough to prevent freezing of the engine and fresh enough to prevent rust. In cold weather, you may also want to change the windshield washer fluid to one containing an antifreezing agent.

Leave extra time and drive more slowly when it is foggy, raining or snowing, and conditions are hazardous. Allow greater following distance in bad weather. In cold weather, bridges and underpasses freeze before the road does.

Rain and Fog

- When it begins to rain, the roads are most slippery during the first half-hour. This is because oil dropped from passing vehicles has not been washed away. Be especially cautious at

intersections where oil deposits may be heavier. Slow down and allow at least twice the normal following distance.

- Brakes may become wet after driving through deep water or during heavy rain. Test them, as they may pull to one side or the other or they may not hold at all. Slow down and gently push on the brake pedal until the brakes work properly again.
- When your tires ride on top of the water on a wet road, you are hydroplaning, which can result in a loss of control. Worn tires, low tire pressure or driving too fast contribute to hydroplaning.
- If a flooded road is blocked off by safety barricades, do not drive around them. The barricades are there because it is unsafe for vehicles. There may be debris or power lines in the water or the road may have been washed away. If there are no barricades in place at a flooded road, consider finding an alternate route. If you do try to drive through, do so with extreme caution. In addition to the hazards already mentioned, deep water can damage your car's engine.
- Drive slowly in fog. Turn on the low-beam headlights and be prepared to stop quickly. When fog becomes so thick that you cannot see at all, pull off the road. Turn on the four-way emergency flashers and wait for the fog to lift.

Using Your Headlights

Nighttime driving is hazardous because your visibility is reduced.

- Headlights must be turned on one half-hour after sunset until one half-hour before sunrise and at other times when visibility is reduced. Use your low beams when it is foggy, raining or snowing during the day. If you are having trouble seeing other vehicles, they will have trouble seeing you. Turn on your headlights whenever you are in doubt.
- Headlights must be on any time there is not enough daylight to see people and vehicles clearly at 500 feet. It is illegal to use only parking lights when headlights are required.

- You should be able to stop within the clear distance you can see ahead. When driving at night, it is critical to drive within the range of the headlights.
- It is illegal to use or even flash high-beam headlights within 500 feet of an oncoming vehicle. Also, dim your lights for pedestrians and cyclists.
- If oncoming drivers do not dim their headlights, keep your eyes on the right edge of the road ahead. Do not look directly into oncoming headlights. The glare may blind you for several seconds. A dirty windshield will make headlight glare worse.
- Do not use high beams when behind other vehicles. Bright lights shining in their rearview mirrors can be distracting.

If an Oncoming Vehicle is in Your Lane

- If there is time, tap the horn to warn the other driver.
- Brake hard, but do not lock the wheels if your vehicle does not have antilock brakes.
- Look for an escape route on the right edge of the road.
- Try not to go to the left since the other driver may see you and return to his or her proper lane.
- Try an emergency stop in your lane only if there is enough room and you cannot pull off the road.
- If you cannot stop before hitting another vehicle, try to steer around it. Do not turn more than needed to avoid a crash.

What to do when Involved in a Crash

- Stop and remain at the scene.
- Help secure medical aid for the injured.
- Vehicles involved in crashes that do not result in serious injury or death shall be moved from the main roadway by the driver or a passenger with a valid driver's license if the vehicle can be driven and it is safe to do so. Look for a safe refuge, such as the shoulder, emergency lane or median.

- Exchange names, addresses, driver's license numbers, registration and insurance information with the other drivers involved in the crash.
- Notify the police if there are injuries or property damage exceeding $1,000.00.
- Leaving the scene of an accident could result in fines, imprisonment or both.

Vehicle - Deer Crashes

About 60,000 vehicle-deer crashes take place in Michigan each year and officials suspect that as many as half of all such crashes are unreported. Vehicle-deer crashes are costly. The average crash results in $2,100 in damages, usually to the vehicle's front end. Annual costs for these crashes statewide are estimated at $130 million. If you do hit a deer, report it to local law enforcement, the county sheriff's office, the Michigan State Police or the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. They can provide a permit to keep it.

Your best defense is to:

- Stay aware, awake, alert and sober.
- Always wear your seat belt. Seat belts are your best defense in any collision.
- Be especially alert in fall and spring, but remember that vehicle-deer crashes can occur at any time of the year.
- Watch for deer crossing signs.
- Slow down if you see one deer. Deer frequently travel in groups. Chances are there are others nearby.
- Be especially alert for deer at dawn and dusk.
- Do not rely on gimmicks. Flashing your high-beam headlights or honking your horn will not deter deer.

If a crash with a deer is unavoidable:

- Do not swerve.
- Brake firmly.
- Hold onto the steering wheel with both hands.
- Come to a controlled stop.
- Steer your vehicle well off the roadway.

7 Your Michigan Driving Record – Alcohol, Drugs and Consequences

Michigan maintains a driving record for every driver. The driving record contains information the Secretary of State is required to maintain, such as moving violations, traffic crashes and alcohol-related convictions. Michigan takes a strong stand against drivers who abuse substances and drive. Motorists who repeatedly drive while drunk or with a suspended license may automatically lose their privilege to drive. Motorists with a health condition who may pose a safety threat to themselves or others on the road may be required to appear for a driver reexamination.

Your Driving Record

Driving is a privilege. Once you obtain a driver's license, you must continually show that you have the skill and knowledge to drive safely or your driver's license may be restricted, suspended or revoked. The Secretary of State has access to accident information reported by law enforcement as well as for moving violations and certain drug crimes from the courts. Your driving record will include information about civil or criminal moving violations and at-fault crashes.

The Secretary of State is also notified of any traffic crashes, convictions and findings of responsibility in other states. Convictions from other states will appear on your Michigan driving record along with any points assessed according to Michigan's point system. You may purchase a copy of your own driving record at any Secretary of State office.

Most convictions stay on your driving record for at least seven years. Certain convictions and licensing actions stay on your driving record for at least 10 years. A conviction for a fatality or for drunken or drugged driving remains on your driving record permanently.

Under Michigan's Driver Privacy Protection Act, personal information on your driving record is private and is not released to the general public unless there is a permissible use as prescribed by law. Personal information includes your name, address, driver's license number and similar information. Some examples of permissible uses include insurance rating, automobile recalls and driver verification for car rental companies.

Traffic Violations and Michigan's Point System

Under Michigan law, some traffic violations are civil infractions, while others are misdemeanors or felonies. Depending on the violation and how it is resolved, you may be fined, referred to a special program or, in the most serious situations, sent to jail. In most cases, if you do not take care of a traffic ticket, your driver's license will be suspended. Any traffic tickets for moving violations received while your license is suspended will result in additional suspensions on your driving record and payment of a reinstatement fee.

Each time you are convicted of a traffic violation, you will have to pay certain court fines and costs. In addition, points may be posted to your driving record.

Each traffic violation has a point value, which is set by law in the Michigan Vehicle Code. Points are placed on your driving record only after you have been convicted or found guilty of, or responsible for, a moving violation. Points placed on your driving record remain there for two years from the date of conviction.

The system used to post points to your driving record is separate from the points assigned by an insurance company to determine your rate.

If you believe there are extenuating circumstances for the ticket you received, these must be submitted when you appear in court. The

Secretary of State cannot set aside a court conviction. The following shows the points for some traffic violations.

Six Points:

- Manslaughter, negligent homicide, or other felony involving use of a motor vehicle.
- Operating while intoxicated or operating with any presence of a Schedule 1 drug or cocaine.
- Failing to stop and give identification at the scene of a crash.
- Reckless driving.
- Refusal to take a chemical alcohol test.
- Fleeing or eluding a police officer.
- Failure to yield causing death or injury of emergency responder, construction worker or person operating implements of animal husbandry.
- Moving violation causing injury or death.

Four Points:

- Drag racing.
- Impaired driving.
- Younger than age 21 with any bodily alcohol content.
- 16 mph or more over the legal speed limit.
- Failure to yield/show due caution for emergency vehicles.
- Moving violation resulting in an at-fault collision.

Three Points:

- Careless driving.
- Disobeying a traffic signal or stop sign or improper passing.
- 11 through 15 mph over the legal speed limit.
- Failure to stop at railroad crossing.
- Failure to stop for a school bus or for disobeying a school crossing guard.

Two Points:

- 10 mph or less over the legal speed limit.
- Open alcohol container in vehicle.

- All other moving violations of traffic laws.
- Refusal of Preliminary Breath Test by anyone younger than age 21.

Alcohol, Drugs and Your Driving Record

When you drink alcohol or use other drugs and drive, you endanger your life as well as the lives of your passengers and other motorists. Each year, thousands of people are killed or permanently disabled because someone drove under the influence of alcohol or other chemical substances. Michigan takes a strong stand against drivers who abuse substances and drive.

The effects of alcohol are the same whether you drink beer, wine or whiskey. A 12-ounce can of beer, 5-ounce glass of wine and a 1.5-ounce shot of whiskey all contain the same amount of alcohol. Drink a standard serving of any of these and the effects will be the same to your body. Your judgment and self-control will be affected. Drinking even one drink can impair your ability to drive, slow your reaction time, dull your concentration and cause visual problems. Many people mistakenly believe that coffee, a cold shower, exercise or fresh air can sober them up. The only thing that sobers you up is time.

It is best to never drink and drive. If you plan on drinking, select a designated driver ahead of time who is not going to drink. You also can ask someone else to give you a ride, call a taxi, use public transportation or seek other assistance. If someone you know has been drinking or using drugs, do not let him or her drive. Find a designated driver, call a taxi or insist that the person use public transportation. Never ride with anyone who has been drinking or using drugs. If necessary, take away a person's car keys and offer him or her a place to sleep. Be sure drivers are completely sober before they get behind the wheel.

Michigan law requires driver's license suspensions for drug convictions, even if you were not driving at the time of the offense. Even the possession, manufacture or distribution of drugs may result in a driver's license suspension. If there are no prior drug

violations, your driver's license is suspended for six months. A restricted license will not be issued during the first 30 days. One or more prior drug convictions in seven years means your driver's license will be suspended for one year. A restricted license will not be issued during the first 60 days. The driver's license reinstatement fee is $125. This fee is separate from the reinstatement fee required for any other driving activity.

The Driver Responsibility Law

In an effort to promote greater traffic safety, Michigan enacted the Driver Responsibility Law to deter potentially dangerous driving behavior, thereby saving lives.

The Driver Responsibility law calls for monetary sanctions for drivers who:

- Accumulate seven or more points on their driving record (Category 1 offenses)
- Are convicted of specific qualifying offenses (Category 2 offenses)

The Driver Responsibility fee is based on the number of points on the driving record, with a minimum of seven points required before a fee is assessed. The fees begin at $100 and increase by $50 for each additional point above seven points.

Drivers assessed a fee under Category 1 are assessed only once per year. Drivers will be assessed each year in which seven or more points show on the record.

7 Points $100	8 Points $150	9 Points $200
10 Points $250	11 Points $300	12 Points $350
13 Points $400	14 Points $450	15 Points $500

Category 2 offenses carry their own Driver Responsibility fee independent from the number of points on the driving record. Drivers convicted of these offenses are assessed a Driver Responsibility fee of $150, $200, $500 or $1,000 for two consecutive years. The amount is determined by the type of offense.

For example:

- Drunken driving or operating while intoxicated – $1,000
- Reckless driving – $500

Points from Category 2 offenses and convictions are not counted toward the point total for Category 1. Multiple Driver Responsibility fees are assessed if a driver is convicted of multiple offenses under Category 2.

The second year's fees will be assessed on the anniversary date of the first year's fees. Failure to pay results in an indefinite suspension of the driver's license. Fee assessments apply to both licensed and unlicensed drivers. As with other suspensions, a $125 reinstatement fee is required before the license is restored.

The Driver Responsibility Program will officially end in October 2019 and no more new fees will be issued after that date. The revised law also changes the Driver Responsibility fee structure for offenses, gradually reducing fees, beginning Oct. 1, 2015. **Only Driver Responsibility fees for points or tickets issued on or after Oct. 1, 2015 are eligible for a rate reduction.** The amount of the reduction for qualifying fees will be increased over the next few years until the program's end in 2019.

You cannot withhold a payment for a Driver Responsibility fee issued in one year to take advantage of a lower discount in a subsequent year. **Driver Responsibility fees for points or qualifying offenses that occurred before Oct. 1, 2015 do not qualify for a rate reduction and do not change**.

Failure to pay Driver Responsibility fees on time may result in a driver's license suspension and other penalties. For more information, please visit the Driver Responsibility website at www.michigan.gov/driverresponsibility.

Driver Reexaminations

The Secretary of State may conduct a reexamination if there is reason to believe you are unable to operate a motor vehicle safely because of health reasons or for violating the restrictions on a driver's license, crash involvement or an unsatisfactory driving record.

If you are a probationary driver or in the Graduated Driver Licensing program, you may be required to attend a driver reexamination after only one or two violations.

The purpose of the driver reexamination is to discuss driving performance, determine the appropriate licensing controls to reduce driving risk associated with this performance, and encourage improvement. Licensing controls may include restrictions, suspensions, revocations or a combination of these actions.

Michigan law allows for a driver reexamination based on one or more of the following criteria:

- The Secretary of State has reason to believe that you are incompetent to drive a motor vehicle or have a physical, visual or mental condition that makes it unsafe for you to operate a motor vehicle.
- You have been involved in a fatal accident.
- You have been in three or more traffic crashes resulting in personal injury or property damage over the past two years.
- You have accumulated 12 or more points within a two-year period.
- You have been convicted of violating the restrictions, terms or conditions of your license.

If you are required to attend a reexamination, a driver analyst will review your driving record and discuss your driving behavior with you. If your license is restricted, suspended or revoked as result of the reexamination, you will be apprised of your appeal rights and license reinstatement information.

A reexamination held due to medical issues will require you to pass several tests, including a vision, written and on-road exams. You may also be required to present current medical, vision or psychological information about yourself.

8 Voter Registration and State ID Cards

The Secretary of State oversees many areas involving traffic safety, including the teen driver, motorcycle safety and Commercial Driver License programs. This chapter provides information about two programs not directly related to traffic safety and licensing but very important nonetheless.

Voter Registration Information

You must be registered to vote to participate in local, state and federal elections. Eligible residents may register at a Secretary of State office.

If you are applying for, renewing or updating information on your driver's license or state ID card, you also will be provided with an opportunity to register to vote.

To register to vote you must be:

- A U.S. citizen.
- At least 18 years old on or before election day.
- A resident of Michigan and the city or township where you wish to register to vote.

In addition to Secretary of State offices, you may register by mail or at your local county, city or township clerk's office. If you are registering to vote in person, state law requires you to show picture ID or sign an affidavit attesting that you are not in possession of picture ID. You must register at least 30 days before the election.

If you move within your city or township, you must change the address on your voter registration. If you move to another city or township, you must register to vote in that jurisdiction to remain eligible to vote. The Secretary of State will enclose a voter registration application with your renewal notice if you are eligible to renew your

driver's license by mail. To register, fill out the voter registration form and send it with your driver's license renewal form. If you are already registered and your address has not changed, you do not need to mail the voter registration form supplied with your driver's license renewal notice. Michigan's mail-in voter registration form also may be printed from the Secretary of State website. First-time voters who register by mail must vote in person in their first election, unless they hand-deliver the application to their local clerk, are 60 years old or older, are disabled or are eligible to vote under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act.

If the address you provide on a voter registration application does not match the residential address on file with the Secretary of State, your driver's license or state ID card will be updated to match your voter registration.

State Identification Cards

A state identification card can be issued to any eligible resident, regardless of age. You may not have a state ID card and a Michigan driver's license unless your license has been restricted, suspended or revoked.

You will need to provide proof of your citizenship or legal presence, identity documentation, two proofs of residency and proof of Social Security number (or present a letter of ineligibility from the Social Security Administration).

Your state ID card expires four years from your last birthday and may be renewed by mail. Under Michigan law, a state ID card is as valid as a driver's license for identification purposes.

Applicants presenting temporary legal presence documents may be issued a state ID card that expires in less than four years.

Free ID cards are provided to those who are legally blind, drivers 65 or older who voluntarily relinquish their driver's license and drivers whose driving privilege is suspended, revoked, or denied due to a physical or mental disability.

Test Your Safe Driving Knowledge

(Correct answers may be found on page 87.)

1. City driving is more dangerous than expressway driving because of the:
   a. Lower speed limits.
   b. Narrower driving lanes.
   c. Cross traffic and pedestrians.
   d. Worse road conditions in bad weather.
2. You come to an intersection with a flashing red light. You must:
   a. Slow down and drive carefully through the intersection.
   b. Turn either right or left since the road is blocked ahead.
   c. Stop at the intersection and wait for a flashing green light.
   d. Stop at the intersection, then proceed as traffic allows.
3. You are driving in the right lane on an expressway. You should probably move into the left lane when:
   a. Traffic is heavy but moving steadily.
   b. The weather is bad and roads are slippery.
   c. Traffic is slow in your lane and cars are in the left lane.
   d. Traffic is light and cars are merging onto the expressway from the right.
4. Before turning left, it is important to:
   a. Sound your horn.
   b. Yield to oncoming vehicles.
   c. Swing to the right side of your lane.
   d. Wait until oncoming traffic has a red light.
5. When entering an expressway behind several other vehicles, it is MOST important to:
   a. Keep your eyes on the vehicle in back of you.
   b. Adjust the position and speed of your vehicle to the flow of traffic.
   c. Stay as close as possible to the vehicle in front of you.
   d. Cancel your turn signal.

6. To reduce the effects of headlight glare at night, you should look:
   a. Straight ahead.
   b. Over your shoulder.
   c. At the center of the road.
   d. To the right edge of the road.
7. You are coming to an intersection with a yellow flashing light. You should:
   a. Stop and wait for the light to change.
   b. Make a U-turn; the intersection is closed.
   c. Drive carefully through the intersection.
   d. Prepare to stop; the light is about to turn red.
8. When changing lanes, you can check your blind spot by:
   a. Using the inside rearview mirror.
   b. Using the outside rearview mirror.
   c. Using both inside and outside rearview mirrors.
   d. Turning your head and looking over your shoulder.
9. When approaching a work zone with a "45 Where Workers Present" sign, drivers should:
   a. Slow down immediately.
   b. Drive at a safe speed for conditions (up to the posted speed limit), watch for construction workers, and slow down to 45 mph or lower where workers are present.
   c. Merge to the right lane.
   d. All of the above.
10. While driving on a two-lane road without bicycle lanes, you encounter a bicyclist traveling in the same direction. What is the safest way to pass the bicyclist?
    a. Slow down and wait until there is no traffic approaching, then pass the bicyclist leaving him or her sufficient space.
    b. Continue driving straight, it is the bicyclist's responsibility to get out of your way.
    c. Do not pass the bicyclist until you come to a traffic signal or stop sign.
    d. Honk to let the bicyclist know you are about to pass.

Answers:
1 (c); 2 (d); 3 (d); 4 (b); 5 (b); 6 (d); 7 (c); 8 (d); 9 (b); 10 (a)

Resources

The following resources will provide you with information about these topics in **What Every Driver Must Know**. Customer service is also available through the Michigan Department of State Information Center at 888-SOS-MICH (767-6424).

Chapter 1 – Michigan Driver's License Information

- **Driver's Licenses** – Visit the Secretary of State website at michigan.gov/sos
- **Graduated Driver Licensing/Teen Driver** – Visit the Secretary of State website at michigan.gov/teendriver. The **Michigan Graduated Driver Licensing Parent Checklist** (SOS-380), **Graduated Driver Licensing: A Guide for Parents** (SOS-383) and **The Parent's Supervised Driving Guide** (SOS-191) are available as PDFs on the teen driver website.
- **Driving Skills Test Study Guide** – A PDF version of the **Driving Skills Test Study Guide** (SOS-360) is available on the Secretary of State website at michigan.gov/sos. Booklets are also available at any Secretary of State office.
- **Probationary License** – Information about the probationary license program and a PDF version of the **Your Probationary License** brochure (SOS-215) are available on the Secretary of State website at michigan.gov/sos. Copies of the brochure are also available at any Secretary of State office.
- **Chauffeur's License** – Information about obtaining a chauffeur's license and a PDF version of the **Your Michigan Chauffeur License** brochure (TS-025) are available on the Secretary of State website at michigan.gov/sos. Copies of

the brochure also are available at any Secretary of State office.

- **Commercial Driver License** – Information about obtaining a Commercial Driver License and a PDF version of the **Michigan Commercial Driver License Manual** (TS-004) are available on the Secretary of State website at michigan.gov/sos. Copies of the CDL Manual are also available at any Secretary of State office.
- **Mopeds** – Information about moped licenses and registering a moped and a PDF version of the **Riding a Moped Safely** brochure (SOS-321) are available on the Secretary of State website at michigan.gov/sos. Copies of the moped brochure are also available at any Secretary of State office.
- **Motorcycles** – To find a motorcycle safety class near you, visit the Secretary of State motorcycle site at michigan.gov/motorcycling. Information about motorcycle endorsements, registering a motorcycle and a PDF version of the **Michigan Motorcycle Operator Manual** (SOS-116) are available online at michigan.gov/sos. Information about the motorcycle skills test is available at michigan.gov/motorcycletest.
- **The Decision to Give Up Driving** – Please refer to the booklet **Great Lakes, Great Years – safety from shore to shore: Michigan's Guide for Aging Drivers and Their Families** (December 2014) available as a PDF version on the Safe Drivers Smart Options: Keys to Lifelong Mobility website at michigan.gov/agingdriver. Copies of the booklet are also available at Secretary of State offices.

Chapter 2 – Seat Belts, Safety Seats and Air Bags

- **Buckle Up, It's the Law and Protecting Children and Teens** – Information about the proper use of safety seats is available on the Secretary of State website at michigan.gov/sos.

Chapter 4 – Signs, Pavement Markings and Signals

- **Van-accessible Disability Parking** – A PDF version of the **Know the Rules** disability parking brochure (SOS - 386) as well as information about disability license plates and placards are available on the Secretary of State website at michigan.gov/sos.
- The Michigan State Police (michigan.gov/msp) and Michigan Department of Transportation (michigan.gov/mdot)websites also provide information about signs, pavement markings, signals and traffic laws.

Chapter 5 – Sharing the Road Safely - Be Courteous!

- **Pedestrians and Bicycles** – Information about pedestrian and bicycle safety is available on the Secretary of State website at michigan.gov/sos.
- **Commercial Vehicles** – Information about commercial vehicles, including how to apply for a Commercial Driver License, is available on the Secretary of State website at michigan.gov/sos.
- **Motorcycles** – Information about sharing the road safely for motorcycle operators is available on the Secretary of State website at michigan.gov/sos.
- **Mopeds** – Information about sharing the road safely for moped operators is available on the Secretary of State website at michigan.gov/sos.

Chapter 7 – Your Michigan Driving Record – Alcohol, Drugs and Consequences

- **Driving Records** – Information about driving records, including how to obtain a copy of your own driving record, is available on the Secretary of State website at michigan.gov/sos.

- **Traffic Violations and Michigan's Point System** – Information about traffic violations and Michigan's point system are available on the Secretary of State website at michigan.gov/sos.
- **Alcohol, Drugs and Your Driving Record** – Information about alcohol, drugs and driving penalties are available on the Secretary of State website at michigan.gov/sos.
- **Driver Responsibility Law** – Information about the Driver Responsibility Law is available at michigan.gov/driverresponsibility.
- **Driver Reexaminations** – Information about driver reexaminations is available on the Secretary of State website at michigan.gov/sos.

Chapter 8 – Voter Registration and State ID Cards

- **Voter Registration** – Information about voting and elections in Michigan is available on the Secretary of State website at michigan.gov/elections. The Michigan Voter Information Center is available at michigan.gov/vote.
- **State ID Cards** – Information about obtaining a state ID card is available on the Secretary of State website at michigan.gov/sos.

The Michigan Secretary of State's Office thanks the following organizations and agencies for their assistance with this latest revision of **What Every Driver Must Know**: The GTSAC Distracted Driving and Incident Management Action Teams, the Michigan Center for Truck Safety, the Michigan Department of State Police and the Office of Highway Safety Planning, and the Michigan Department of Transportation.

SOS-133 (Rev. 04/16) PA 300, 1949 as amended; (100,000 @ $0.21 per copy, total $21,115.89)

The Secretary of State website is designed to put information and access at your fingertips. Michigan residents now can conduct a wide range of business with the Secretary of State using a laptop, tablet or smart phone.

- Visit **michigan.gov/sos** for information about Secretary of State services, programs, documents and forms.
- The official Secretary of State Twitter feed is available at **twitter.com/michsos**.
- Visit us on Facebook at **facebook.com/Michigansos**.
- Sign up for Secretary of State Express news updates at **michigan.gov/sos**.

ExpressSOS.com: Your online, no-wait Secretary of State

Renewing your vehicle registration online is quick and easy. You can renew your tabs online right up to midnight on your birthday without a late fee and then 'print and go' by printing a legal copy of your registration to use until your tabs arrive in the mail. ExpressSOS.com also offers driver's license and state ID card renewal, change of address, replacement licenses and ID cards, watercraft renewals and more.

About Our Secretary of State Offices

- All Secretary of State offices accept cash, checks or money orders.
- Discover, MasterCard and Visa credit and debit cards are accepted at the counter at all Secretary of State offices. A nominal processing fee is charged for credit/debit card use at the branches and at ExpressSOS.com.
- Hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday; 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Wednesday. Please note: Offices located in some larger cities are open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Wednesday.
- PLUS offices and SUPER!Centers are open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Wednesday.
- SUPER!Centers offer Saturday hours from 9 a.m. to noon.
- Small offices may close for a lunch hour, and all offices are closed on state holidays.

Accommodations for People with Disabilities and Non-Native Speakers

Individuals with a disability will find Secretary of State offices in compliance with standards established by the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need accommodation or have been denied services, call 888-SOS-MICH (767-6424). Hearing impaired customers should contact the Michigan Relay Center at 800-649-3777.

Original driver's license tests are available in many foreign languages, with English and Spanish versions available on audiotape for individuals who have trouble understanding English.

If you have questions or need more information about any service offered by the Secretary of State, please call the Michigan Department of State Information Center at 888-SOS-MICH (767-6424).

Secretary of State
Ruth Johnson
www.Michigan.gov/sos

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