

# Gov. Whitmer Signs Car Seat Bills

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Michigan now has clearer laws on the books to help parents with child car seat restraints and to put the state in line with federal standards.

Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed several pieces of legislation on Thursday, including HB 4511 and HB 4512, which update Michigan's child car seat restraint requirements.

Whitmer also signed legislation to guarantee children in foster care have access to an education that meets the Michigan Merit Curriculum content standards.

"Today, we are taking more extensive action to further the safety of every Michigan child. From safe transportation to providing a guaranteed and quality education for all children within the foster care system," Whitmer said in a statement. "Getting this done will further the success of all Michigan children and keep them safe."

HB 4511, now Public Act 21 of 2024, was sponsored by Rep. Carrie Rheingans (D-Ann Arbor) and received support from the Department of State Police and medical professionals.

"Every child deserves safety and security wherever they are, especially in a vehicle when being properly restrained can be lifesaving," said Michigan State Police Director James Grady in a statement. "The State Police supports this legislation which aligns Michigan law with federal safety guidelines providing additional safety protections for properly restrained children traveling on our roads."

Holly Alway, Safe Kids West Michigan Coalition coordinator and Injury prevention manager at Trinity Health, similarly endorsed the bill, saying that putting guidelines in place will help keep kids safe.

"The child passenger safety legislation updates exemplify Michigan's unwavering dedication to children's safety by bringing laws more closely in line with current best practices," Alway said. "While transitioning children from rear-facing to forward-facing and booster seats can be confusing, we are dedicated to supporting families in navigating these stages. Safe Kids coordinators and child passenger safety technicians across Michigan stand ready to offer hands-on guidance on proper fit and installation and provide resources to ensure every child is protected while traveling."

HB 4512, now Public Act 22 of 2024, sponsored by Rep. John Fitzgerald (D-Wyoming), allows courts to waive any civil fine cost, or assessment against a person who received a civil infraction for a violation of child restraint system, if that person can show evidence they have received education on child safety restraints.

"The signing of House Bills 4511 and 4512 marks a huge step forward for the safety of our youngest Michiganders. By aligning Michigan's safety seat standards with federal guidelines, we ensure that parents and caregivers have consistent information about which seat is right for their child," Fitzgerald said in a statement. "I am proud to have played a part in this important achievement. Together, we are making Michigan a safer place for families and growing Michiganders."