

DRIVE SAFELY IN MICHIGAN



**A Guide
for Refugees**



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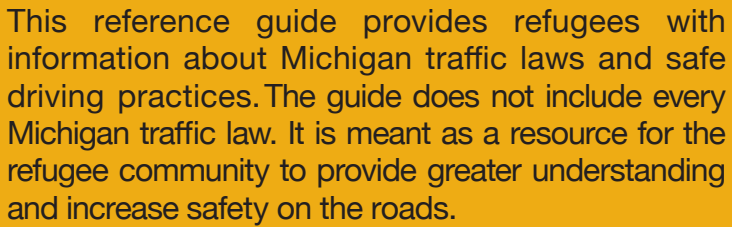
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This reference guide provides refugees with information about Michigan traffic laws and safe driving practices. The guide does not include every Michigan traffic law. It is meant as a resource for the refugee community to provide greater understanding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



Passenger Safety

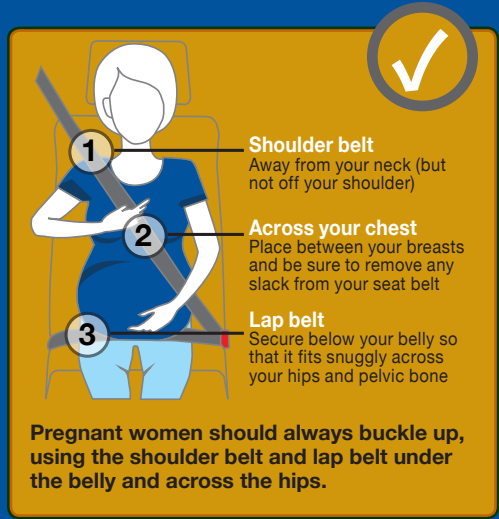


Seat Belts



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

» Air bags are designed to work with seat belts.



Children in Vehicles

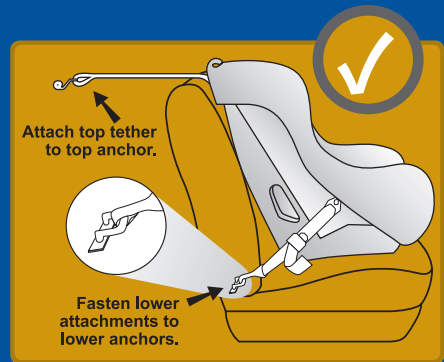


- Michigan law requires children to be restrained in a car seat or booster seat until at least age 8 or 4'9" (144.78 cm) tall.

» Children do not fit in seat belts and need car seats to protect them.

» Babies should be in a rear-facing car seat until at least age 2 and then use a car seat with a harness until approximately age 5, at which time a booster seat is needed.

- Nursing a baby while the vehicle is moving is prohibited.
- When obtaining a car seat, do not use it if:
 - » The seat has been involved in a crash previously.
 - » The seat is past the manufacturer's expiration date.
 - » The history of the seat is unknown to you (if purchased at a garage sale or resale store).



Heatstroke



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

Bed of the Truck



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

A hand holding a smartphone in a car, with a blurred road and streetlights in the background. The image is overlaid with a dark blue horizontal band containing white text.

Things that Impair Driving Ability

Mobile Phone Use



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

Distracted Driving



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

Minors Drinking



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

Impaired Driving



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





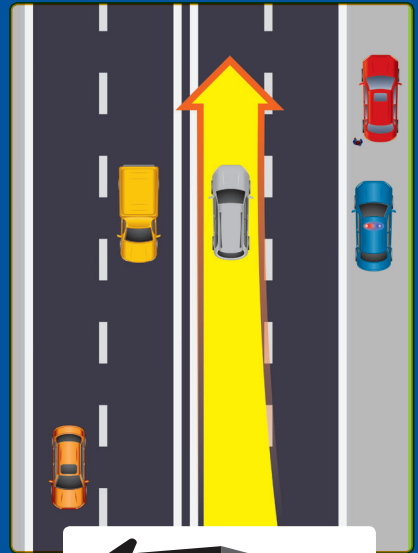
Rules of the Road



“Move Over” Law



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



School Buses



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



Construction Zones



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



Lanes of Travel



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

Driving Violations



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

Traffic Violation Bond



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

Getting Pulled Over



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



OF TITLE

Administrative Information

No of Brands	Use	PRIVATE	03/29/2
Full Material	Prop	Date of	06/21/
		Prev Issue	
		Title Number	

Vehicle Registration and Insurance



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

Titling and Registering a Vehicle

When purchasing a vehicle from an individual

Purchase vehicle

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

Get insurance for your new vehicle

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

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

When purchasing a vehicle from a dealership

The dealer will:

Handle all the paperwork for title, registration, and plate

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

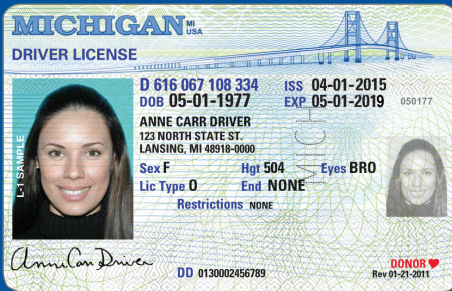
Collect the required fees and taxes

Provide you with copies of all documents

Michigan Driver's License



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



Foreign Driver's License

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

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



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