Rhode Island
Division of
Motor Vehicles



Driver's manual

Rhode Island

Division of Motor Vehicles

Please visit us: **www.dmv.ri.gov**

April 2024

A MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR



Dear New Motorist,

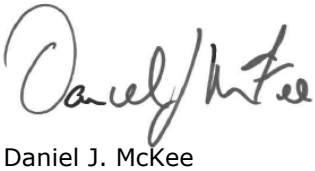
As Governor, a parent, and now a grandparent, it is extremely important to me that every time you get behind the wheel of a motor vehicle, safety is your number one priority. Driving is a privilege, and with it comes the responsibility of protecting yourself and those around you. Traffic laws and the rules of the road exist to keep us all safe. By learning and following these rules, you significantly increase the likelihood of arriving home safely.

Rhode Island is a beautiful state, and driving is not only a means of transportation but also a great way to explore the scenic landscapes and everything our great state has to offer. However, it is crucial to minimize our distractions while driving. Taking your eyes off the road for a phone call or a text message can have severe consequences, and no notification is worth endangering your life and the lives of those around you.

Now, more than ever, we should practice safe driving and encourage others to do the same. Driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol is irresponsible and illegal, putting not only your life at risk but also the lives of others. Drowsy driving has proven to be extremely dangerous and should be avoided at all costs. Remember to wear your seat belt, as it is the single most effective step you can take to protect yourself in a crash. Make sure your family members buckle up and children are securely fastened in the appropriate car seat for their size. It is also essential to adhere to speed limits, as we know most serious crashes involve excessive speed.

It's also important to remember that you are not the only driver on the road. While you may be the safest driver in the world, you cannot control what other people do. Be vigilant and cautious of other drivers because not everyone is responsible, alert, or follows the rules.

Your actions on the road can shape the future of driving. By prioritizing safety every time you take the wheel, you have the power to lead a generation of responsible drivers. The State of Rhode Island is here to support you on every step of your driving journey. Together, we can foster a safe driving culture and ensure a bright future for Rhode Island.



Daniel J. McKee



DONATE LIFE® Rhode Island

Organ Donation Saves Lives

When you apply for your license, you will
have an opportunity to register as a donor.

Saying "*Yes*" can save a life!

Fact: Saying "Yes" to donation will not affect your medical care.

Fact: There is no cost to the donor or their family for donation to take place.

Fact: All major religions support organ and tissue donation or view it as an individual's decision.

Fact: In the United States, it is illegal to buy or sell organs for transplantation.

You Have the Power to Donate Life!

For more information, please visit

www.DonateLifeRI.org

The Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) is a governmental agency within the Department of Revenue for the State of Rhode Island. Under the direction of the Administrator ("Registrar"), the Division administers motor vehicle and transportation related laws, specifically Motor Vehicle Titling, Registration and Licensing Laws, Transportation Safety Laws, Motor Vehicle Franchise Dealer and Manufacturer laws, and other Motor Vehicle-related laws and regulations as directed by the Registrar for the State of Rhode Island. The division is responsible for motor vehicle registration, testing and licensing of motor vehicle operators, inspection of motor vehicles, enforcement of laws relating to the issuance, suspension, and revocation of motor vehicle registrations and driver's licenses, and administration of the motor vehicle insurance laws.

CCRI is New England's largest comprehensive community college with an average of nearly 18,000 students enrolled in credit classes each semester and thousands more in non-credit workforce and personal enrichment classes. CCRI has full-service campuses in Warwick, Lincoln, Providence, Newport County, and satellite campuses in Westerly and Woonsocket.

The Community College of Rhode Island is responsible for the administration of the majority of the traffic safety education programs in Rhode Island that provide services to nearly 20,000 residents annually. Under the auspices of the Rhode Island Office of Postsecondary Commissioner, the college operates the statewide Driver Education and Motorcycle safety programs; manages the state's two primary driver retraining programs, Alcohol Education course and the Defensive Driving course; and administers the School Bus Driver Road test. The college also provides classroom training and recertification for Rhode Island's School Bus Drivers.

For information on any of these programs, contact CCRI's Division of Workforce Partnerships at 401-825-1214 or visit our Web site at www.ccri.edu/cwce.

WHAT IS LITTER & HOW CAN YOU HELP KEEP RHODE ISLAND LITTER FREE?

Litter includes waste that is intentionally improperly disposed, such as cigarette butts, food packaging, and other trash discarded by pedestrians and motorists. Additionally, litter also includes waste that is unintentionally (but improperly) disposed, such as trash from overflowing trash cans, unsecured loads that accidentally release trash from garbage trucks or pick-up truck beds, vehicle debris from accidents, or when there are not proper mechanisms in place to dispose of various items. Whether intentional or unintentional, litter negatively impacts community pride, tourism, and property values in Rhode Island and needs to be prevented.

Beyond aesthetics, litter detrimentally affects our environment, quality of life, and economic progress. It contaminates our roads, water bodies, soil, and air, inflicting irreversible harm on ecosystems. Wildlife frequently confuses litter for food or becomes entangled in it, resulting in injury or death. Preventing litter is easy but its removal from the environment and Rhode Island roadways poses a difficult and expensive challenge. Litter breaks down into smaller pieces such as microplastics, which can leach harmful chemicals into the environment, contaminating the food chain and drinking water, which poses risks to human health. This degradation of litter makes it difficult to remove and requires expensive equipment, increased labor costs, and can result in additional risks to both the environment and humans. Litter along our roadways can be a navigational hazard that leads to ponding of water and airborne materials that reduces the line of vision. Rhode Island is the Ocean State, and no one enjoys seeing litter and trash in our beautiful ocean or anywhere else in our communities.

Understanding litter's definition and its adverse effects empowers us to responsibly dispose of waste, ensuring it stays within our vehicles and off our roadways. Let's refrain from tossing items out of our vehicles, devise strategies to securely manage trash within our vehicles, and routinely check for waste before driving, particularly with open windows or sunroofs. Let's also exercise caution in securing items in truck beds to prevent litter from spreading. Together, we can ensure Rhode Island stays clean and beautiful.

MESSAGE TO THE READER

Read this Driver's Manual carefully. It contains a wealth of information that you will need to know to be a safe and courteous driver. The information on the RI DMV Knowledge exam and the Driver Skills test is covered in this manual. Once you have obtained your driver's license, keep this manual where you can find it easily and refer to it. Please read on.

PLEASE NOTE

Effective July 3, 2007, per Public Law 2006, Chapter 246, Article 7, Relating to Debt Management Act Joint Resolutions, Section 4, the Division of Motor Vehicles instituted a technology surcharge applicable to all DMV transactions for which a fee is typically charged. Effective July 1, 2013, Rhode Island licenses and motor vehicle registrations are subject to surcharges as part of the Transportation Investment and Debt Reduction Act of 2011. Please be advised that the fees may be subject to these surcharges.

PLEASE NOTE

A non-refundable fee and technology surcharge will be charged on all operator road skills tests conducted by the Division of Motor Vehicles. A road skills test may be scheduled at the time of the computerized knowledge exam or by making a Reservation online. Please refer to www.dmv.ri.gov for reservations, RI DMV locations and the most up-to-date fee table.

This manual is co-produced by Rhode Island Division of Motor Vehicles, the Community College of Rhode Island, Driver Education Program, the Rhode Island State Police, and the Rhode Island Department of Transportation as a guideline for the user to develop helpful procedures for safe and law-abiding driving skills. While the manual contains a great deal of useful information about state laws and driving procedures, this is not a legal document.
For up-to-date changes in laws, fees, and procedures, log onto to www.dmv.ri.gov or www.rilin.state.ri.us.

A MESSAGE FROM THE DOT DIRECTOR



Dear Future Drivers,

My name is Peter Alviti, Jr. and I am the Director of RI's Department of Transportation. You might assume that I write this letter because it's my job to assure everyone that our roads and bridges are built for safe driving and because I lead the charge for DOT's highway safety initiatives. Certainly that is undeniable. More importantly I write this letter because I care, because I am a father, a grandfather, a husband, and a friend. The people I invest in drive on our roads, walk on our streets, bike on our bike paths, and use public transportation. We all have people who care about us, who invest in us, and who want us to succeed and to be safe.

We at the Department of Transportation want ***you*** to succeed as you progress through the process of becoming an educated, safe and responsible driver. That is why we support the Department of Motor Vehicle's well designed Driver's Education program and manual. Please use the tools you receive through this program to gain the knowledge you will need to become a licensed Rhode Island driver. Once you obtain your permit, we suggest that you take time to gain numerous and well monitored, behind-the-wheel driving experience. A *good* driver knows and respects the rules of the road. A *good* driver follows posted speed limits. A *good* driver is never impaired by alcohol or any other drug. A *good* driver always wears their seatbelt and only allows seatbelt fastened passengers in their vehicle. A *good* driver does not text and drive and they do not check their electronic communication device messages.

A *PREPARED* driver understands that driving is not only about operating a vehicle. A *PREPARED* driver understands that they must respect pedestrians and other motorists. A *PREPARED* driver recognizes that their behavior on the road impacts others. A *PREPARED* driver knows that there are people who need them to return home safe and alive, so they make good choices to protect themselves and others. And a *PREPARED* driver knows that driving in Rhode Island is a privilege, not a right, and they honor that privilege by gaining driving knowledge, practicing their driving skills, and respecting others who use our roadways.

I know you will be a *PREPARED* driver. Drivers' education is crucial for that *preparedness*. Motor vehicle crashes is the leading cause of death for all 15–20-year-olds. That is the truth we at the RI DOT recognize and it is the truth that drives us to support RI's young driver education programs. Each of you deserves the right to grow into a safe and responsible driver. We are honored to support that right and to do all we can to help you remain safe, alive, and injury free.

Stay Safe and Make Good Decisions,

Peter Alviti, Jr., P.E.
Director
Rhode Island Department of Transportation

A MESSAGE FROM THE DMV ADMINISTRATOR



Welcome,

Obtaining a driver's license is a memorable experience. It is a symbol of independence and gives us the opportunity to become productive members of society and no longer rely on others to get to school, work, or appointments.

But having a driver's license comes with a high degree of responsibility and personal accountability. When you get behind the wheel and drive around our great State, and elsewhere, it is **YOUR** responsibility to do so in a manner that ensures your safety, that of your passengers, and the public at large.

This Manual is designed to help you get your license by explaining the application process, types of permits and licenses, and the driver skills test requirements. It also is a wealth of information on various topics such as basic driving skills, safety rules, signs, and markings, driving emergencies, and driving under the influence, to name a few.

While the Manual will help you prepare for the knowledge exam it will be up to you to practice and develop safe driving habits, not only as you prepare to get your license but every time you drive.

Please remember to always buckle up, don't drink and drive, and don't text and drive – it really can wait!

Good luck! I wish you many years of safe driving.



Table of Contents

I. Applying For a Rhode Island Driver's License 10
A. Before Getting a Limited Learner Permit 10
B. Limited Learner Permit 11
C. Learner Provisional License 12
D. Full Operator's License 14
E. Summary: Rhode Island's Graduated Licensing System 15
F. Out-of-State Drivers: Obtaining a Rhode Island Driver's License 16

II. The Effects of Distractions, Drowsiness, and Emotions on Driving 17
A. Distracted Driving 17
B. Preventing and Managing Distractions 19
C. Drowsy Driving 20
D. Emotions 22
E. Aggressive Driving and Road Rage 23
F. Guidelines to Controlling Emotions 23
G. Preventing Aggressive Driving and Road Rage 24
H. Responding to Aggressive Driving and Road Rage 24

III. Basic Driving Skills and Safety Rules 26
A. Before Starting The Engine 26
B. Rhode Island Safety Belt/Child Restraint Law 26
C. Stopping Your Vehicle 28
D. How To Turn 28
E. Turnabouts 30
F. Stopping and Parking 31
G. Starting on a Hill 33
H. Starting from the Curb or Making a Safe Lane Change 33
I. Entering the Roadway from a Private Road or Driveway 33
J. Passing Another Vehicle 33
K. Proper Backing Procedures 34
L. Freeway/Highway Driving Limited Access Highway 34
M. Safe Driving on the Highway 35
N. Cellular Phone Usage – Personal Wireless Communications Devices 36

IV. Signals and Roadway Markings 38
A. Signals 38
B. Roadway Markings 38
C. Rotary/Roundabout Diagram 40
D. Traffic Lights/Signals: 41

V. Driving Emergencies 43
A. How to Avoid Skidding 43
B. How to Control a Vehicle in a Skid 43
C. Total Brake Failure 43
D. Blowout or Flat Tire 43
E. Stuck Accelerator Pedal 44
F. Engine Failure 44
G. Off Road Recovery 44
H. Threat of a Head-on Collision 44
I. Threat of a Side-Impact Collision 45
J. Threat of a Rear-End Collision 45
K. Headlight Failure 45
L. Vehicle Stalls on Railroad Tracks 45
M. Vehicle Catches Fire 46
N. Vehicle in Water 46
O. Driving in Inclement Weather 46
P. Carbon Monoxide Poisoning 47

VI. Motorcycles 48

VII. Systems for Safe, Courteous, and Defensive Driving 50
A. The Three (3) Second Rule – Following Distance 50
B. Point of no Return 51
C. Lane Positions 51

VIII. Sharing the Road Safely 52
A. Sharing The Road With Large Trucks 52
B. Night Driving 52
C. Pedestrians 53
D. Pedestrians with a Visual Impairment 54
E. School Buses 54
F. Bicycle Riders 54
G. Aggressive Driving 56

IX. Laws You Must Know 58

X. Drinking / Drugs and Driving 60
A. Effects of Alcohol and Other Drugs on the Body 60
B. Blood Alcohol Concentration 61
C. Implied Consent 61
D. Refusal to Take the Breathalyzer Test 61
E. Penalties 61

XI. In Case of a Collision 65
A. What to do After a Collision 65
B. What to Report if you Have a Collision 65
C. Common Causes of Collisions 65
D. Violations Resulting from a Collision 66

XII. When Stopped by a Law Enforcement Officer 67

XIII. Equipment You Must Inspect! 68

XIV. Organ and Tissue Donor Program 69

XV. Passing Your Driver Skills Test 70

XVI. One Final Word 71

XVII. Appendices 72
A. Miscellaneous Motor Vehicle Laws 72
B. Construction and Work Zone Safety Requirements 72
C. Directions to CCRI 73
D. Driver's Education Completion Certificates 73
E. DMV Online Transactions – www.dmv.ri.gov 74
F. License & ID Card Identification Requirements and Acceptable Documents 76

I. Applying For a Rhode Island Driver's License

Rhode Island has a graduated licensing system for persons under age eighteen (18) wishing to drive a motor vehicle. The three levels of the **graduated licensing system** are: **Learner instructional permit**, **Learner provisional license** and **full operator's license**. They are described below.

A. Before Getting a Limited Learner Permit

What do I do first if I want to get my Limited Learner Permit?

If you are between the ages of sixteen (16) and eighteen (18), there are two (2) requirements you must complete before you can get your Limited Learner Permit.

First: You must pass an accredited thirty-three (33) hour classroom driver education class.
Second: You must pass a computerized knowledge exam administered by the Division of Motor Vehicles ("DMV").

NOTE: All applicants who take the thirty-three (33) hour driver education course with CCRI take the RI DMV Knowledge examination (Permit test) through CCRI. Applicants must successfully complete the course and pass the exam, to apply for their Limited Learner Permit.

If you are over the age of eighteen (18), you are not required to attend the classroom course, but you must take the computerized knowledge exam.

How** and where **do I enroll in a driver education class?

Contact the Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) at 401-825-1214 or go online at: www.ccri.edu/cwce. Click on Rhode Island Driver Education Program for information about locations or dates and times of classes. For your convenience, registrations must be completed online and submitted with a credit card payment. The fee for Driver Education classes is $120.00[1]. You will be required to bring the following items to the first day of class: proof of identity and age (birth certificate, state issued identification card, passport, resident alien card, etc.). **Photocopies of these documents are not acceptable**.

AAA Driving School: northeast.aaa.com/driving-school/ri.html

Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI): www.ccri.edu/workforce/transportation/DriverEd.html
* Applicants who completed the driver-education class offered by CCRI have the option of taking the RI DMV knowledge exam (permit test) through the college.

Labonte's Auto School: www.labontesautoschool.com/

Newport County Driving School: newportcountydrivingschool.com

Roberson's Turning Point: Roberson's Turning Point

Can I take the driver education course before the age of 16?

Although you cannot obtain a Limited Learner Permit from the DMV until you are sixteen (16), you are eligible to register for a driver education class when you are between fifteen (15) and up to twenty-two (22) years of age, provided you will be at least **fifteen years and ten (10) months old on the first day of class**.

Who must take the knowledge exam?

First-time applicants (and those who fail the RI DMV knowledge exam through CCRI) must take the computerized examination at the main office of the DMV in Cranston. The computerized knowledge exam has a 90-minute maximum and consist of forty (40) multiple choice questions. **An online Reservation is required**. Licensed applicants from other states are exempt from taking the **exam but** must turn in their out-of-state licenses for

cancellation.

How do I prepare for the knowledge exam?

The computerized knowledge exam questions are based on the motor vehicle laws and the rules of the road. Applicants should study this manual to prepare for the knowledge exam. The exam is available in other languages upon request.

[1] CCRI is a state supported agency and therefore, fees are subject to change.

B. Limited Learner Permit

How do I get my Limited Learner Permit?

The Limited (Learner) Instructional Permit is a preliminary license for persons learning to drive and who have passed the computerized knowledge exam and who are under the age of eighteen (18).

You may apply for a Limited Learner Permit at the DMV. Applicants for permits must show:

- A certified birth certificate, an active passport, Rhode Island/government identification card, or a resident alien card (photocopies are not acceptable).
- A driver education certificate of completion of thirty-three (33) hours (if you are under eighteen (18) years of age).
- Permit fee (Please refer to DMV fee table for updated fee). Fees can be paid by cash, check (no third-party checks accepted), credit card or money order.
- Two (2) proofs of Rhode Island residency.
- Application for Limited Learner Permit (LI-1 form).
- Parent, legal guardian (court documentation must be presented), licensed foster parent (DCYF documentation must be presented), or adult spouse must accompany you to the DMV. This adult person must be a resident of Rhode Island and qualified to be a supervising driver (as described below). NOTE: A parent who does not hold a valid Rhode Island license can sign the application for a child who is under eighteen (18) years old but **must be seated in the back seat during practice driving. Does not qualify as a supervising driver.**

See Appendix G (Identification Requirements and Acceptable Documents) for detailed information about which documents are required and what types of documents are acceptable.

A supervising driver must be a licensed driver who has been licensed to drive for at least five (5) years and must be twenty-one (21) years of age or older.

All applicants must take a vision test or submit a Vision Examination Card, signed by an ophthalmologist or optometrist. If you normally wear contact lenses or corrective lenses to see at a distance, you must wear them at the time of your vision test. Your vision must be at least 20/40 with corrected lenses.

The application of any person under the age of eighteen (18) years for a limited Learner permit, a limited provisional license, or a full operator's license shall be signed and verified before a person authorized to administer oaths, or by one or more of the following individuals: the father, mother, guardian, adult husband or wife, or licensed foster parent, and, who is a resident of this state and qualified to be a supervising driver pursuant to 31-10-6.1. In the event there is no parent, guardian, or licensed foster parent who meets these requirements, then, in accordance with 31-10-14, another responsible adult who is willing to assume the obligation required by a person signing an application for a minor imposed under 31-10-1 through 31-10-33 may sign the application.

What does a Limited Learner Permit allow me to do?

With a Limited Learner Permit, you can practice driving under the supervision of a properly licensed driver who has held a license for at least five (5) years and is twenty-one (21) years of age or older. The licensed driver must be seated beside you at all times and be ready to take control of the vehicle in an emergency. The licensed driver is legally responsible for any driving violation you may commit. You must wear a safety belt as required by law unless you provide the DMV with a physician's letter indicating you cannot wear a safety belt for medical reasons. ALL passengers must wear a safety belt or be in a child restraint system as required by law.

Practice makes perfect. The more times you practice with a supervising driver, the more likely you will learn and correct any unsafe driving habits. Practice driving in different conditions and a variety of roadways. Try to enjoy the learning process with your supervising driver. Driving is a privilege towards independence.

How long must I drive with a Limited Instructional Permit?

You must hold a Learner Instructional Permit for at least six (6) months before you can take a Rhode Island DMV driving skills test.

How long is a Limited Learner Permit valid?

The permit is valid until the permit holder turns 18 years of age. This permit can be renewed a maximum of two (2) times. Once a permit has been expired for more than two years, it can longer be renewed. If you reach the age of eighteen (18) before holding a Limited Learner's Permit for one (1) year, you may apply for a full learner's permit.

C. Learner Provisional License

When can I get a Learner Provisional License?

In order to get this license, you must:

1. Have held for at least six (6) months a Limited Learner Permit issued by the DMV.
2. Not have been convicted of a motor vehicle moving violation or a safety belt infraction during the previous six (6) months.
3. Have passed the driving skills test administered by the DMV.
4. Present a statement signed by a parent or guardian stating that you have completed a minimum of fifty (50) hours of driving experience with a supervising driver with ten (10) of those hours at night.

What is the driving skills test?

An applicant for a Learner's Provisional License or a first license must pass a driving skills test administered by a DMV examiner. You must provide the automobile to be used in the test. It must be a vehicle registered in Rhode Island and the registered owner or the spouse of the owner must be present in the vehicle. If the owner is not present, a notarized letter from the owner giving permission to use the vehicle for this purpose must be presented to the DMV examiner. In addition, the vehicle must be actively inspected and insured.

How do I apply for the driving skills test?

Once a Limited Learner Permit is issued, you should begin to practice driving, with a supervising driver. Be sure to schedule your Driving Skills test with the DMV before the one (1) year Limited Learner Permit expires. To schedule a Reservation for your driving skills test, go to www.dmv.ri.gov .

What is covered on the driving skills test?

The test includes pre-driving procedures, maneuverability test, parallel parking, three-point turnabout, backing maneuver, and other common driving experiences. If you fail the driving skills test, you must reschedule your test and take it again.
The following are reasons for immediate failure of a driving test:

- Seat belt violation (driver and/or passenger)
- Stop Sign Violation
- Running over curb or cone with one or more wheels
- Intervention by passenger (verbal or Physical Intervention)
- Collision with barrier
- Any dangerous action

Who must take the driving skills test?

All first-time applicants must take the driving skills test. Persons with a valid driver's license from another state are not required to take the driving test.

Preparing for the Driving Skills Test

All driving skill test instructions and directions will be in English. To assist you, there is a translated vocabulary list (Spanish and Portuguese only) of common words and instructions used during the driving skills test. The list is available on the Rhode Island DMV website, www.dmv.ri.gov and at any of the Rhode Island DMV locations.

The following is a checklist of documentation and vehicle requirements that must be met prior to performing a driving skills test (road test). Please take the time to review this list and check the vehicle to be used for compliance. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the DMV Driving Skills Road Test Office at (401) 462-5750 prior to arrival in order to avoid any possible setbacks or complications.

A parent, legal guardian or instructor who qualifies as a supervising driver must be present at the time of the driving skills test.

For a list of driving skills test fees, please refer to www.dmv.ri.gov. for the most up-to-date fee table. Fees are payable by cash, credit card, check, or money order.

DOCUMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DRIVING SKILLS TEST

- ☐ Original permit – photocopies are not acceptable.
- ☐ Signed and notarized affidavit of 50 hours driving experience required for all drivers under 18 years of age.
- ☐ License of the supervising driver (out-of-state license is acceptable).
- ☐ Notarized letter allowing use of vehicle when registered owner is not present (where applicable).
- ☐ Notarized letter from the owner/president of a corporation acknowledging use of a corporate vehicle, if being used for the driving skills test (where applicable).

VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DRIVING SKILLS TEST

☐ **Proof of valid Rhode Island registration**.

Two Exceptions:

1. Valid military ID is required if the vehicle is registered to a family member of a military person, or the military person is stationed in Rhode Island.
2. Driving school with a valid out-of-state registration must have current RI Financial Responsibility Insurance Certificate (GU-1338b) on file with the RI DMV. A copy of this form must also be presented to the Examiner at the Driving Skills Test site.

- ☐ **Proof of valid Rhode Island auto insurance** – identification card, electronic insurance card or photocopies are acceptable. Vehicle owners ***must*** be listed on the card.
- ☐ Leased vehicles ***must*** show proof of the lessee.
- ☐ Valid inspection sticker (Exception: vehicles that are less than 2 years old and 24,000 miles or less.
- ☐ No rental vehicles allowed for the driving test.
- ☐ No pets allowed in vehicles used for the driving skills test. Registered Service Dog, require certified documentation.
- ☐ A Motor Vehicle Operator Examiner will conduct a vehicle safety inspection prior to the driving exam.

The following is part of the safety inspection:

- Starting the engine
- Brake lights
- Directional lights (Front/Rear left and right turn signals)
- Headlights (low and high beams)
- Hazard lights
- Tires
- Horn
- Windows (must roll down)
- Legal tint only (after manufacture tint must have proper certification).

If you do not bring all required documentation, or if your vehicle is deemed unsafe for the driving skills test, you will be required to reschedule – you may not leave the driving skills test area to secure missing documentation and return.

When taking your driving skills test, you should drive a car that you are familiar with. You must be fully familiar with all the controls of the vehicle without having to look for them. If you take your driving skills test in the rain you should know beforehand where the controls for the windshield wipers and the headlights are and how to adjust them. Likewise, you should know where the button for the hazard lights is located without looking or having it pointed out to you. The hazard light button is usually indicated by a red or white triangle, and it is normally located

on top of the steering column or in the center of the dash.

Once I pass the driving skills test, what's next?

After you have passed your driving skills test, you must go to the DMV to get your Limited Provisional License. You must do this before your Limited Learner Permit expires. If you are under eighteen (18), a parent, guardian, licensed foster parent, or adult spouse must accompany you, unless their signature is notarized on the application. In the event there is not a person who meets these requirements, then you may bring with you a responsible adult who is willing to assume the legal obligation of a person signing the application of a minor under the age of eighteen (18). In all cases, the person must reside in Rhode Island and qualify to be a supervising driver, that is, a driver who has been licensed to drive for at least five (5) years and twenty-one (21) years of age or older.

What if I fail the driving skills test?

If you fail the driving skills test, go to www.dmv.ri.gov to make another Reservation. You will not be allowed to re-take the test immediately. You must wait at least 30 days before your next appointment. If an appointment is not available before your permit expires for a second time, you may need to take the knowledge exam again and obtain a new permit. You are not eligible to take the knowledge exam until your present permit has expired.

What is the fee for a Limited Provisional License?

Please refer to www.dmv.ri.gov for locations and the most up-to-date fee table.

What are the conditions of a Learner's Provisional License?

A PERSON WITH A LEARNER PROVISIONAL LICENSE CANNOT DRIVE BY THEMSELVES BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 1:00 A.M. AND 5:00 A.M.

With a limited provisional license in your possession, you can drive a motor vehicle under certain conditions:

With supervision:

1. At any time.
2. A supervising driver must be seated beside you while the vehicle is in motion.

Without supervision in any of the following circumstances:

1. Between 5:00 a.m. and 1:00 a.m.
2. When driving to or from work.
3. When driving to or from any activity of a volunteer fire department, volunteer rescue squad, or volunteer emergency medical service if the driver is a member of such organization.
4. From 4:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. when driving between license holder's home and a school sponsored athletic activity for which no transportation is provided by the school.

In both cases, everyone in the vehicle must be properly fastened by a safety belt or child restraint system at all times.

This license expires on your eighteenth (18th) birthday.

During the first twelve (12) months of a learner's provisional license no more than one (1) passenger younger than twenty-one (21) years of age is allowed in the vehicle. Immediate family and household members are exempt from this rule.

D. Full Operator's License

When can I get my Full Operator's License?

In order to get your full operator's license, you must:

1. Be at least seventeen (17) years, six (6) months old.
2. Have held for at least twelve (12) months a Limited Provisional License issued by the DMV.
3. Have not been convicted of a motor vehicle moving violation or safety belt infraction during the previous six

(6) months.

Are there any restrictions for the Full Operator's License?

With a Full Operator's License, you may drive without restrictions concerning time of driving and supervision. You are, of course, still required to follow all the other rules of the road, including those applying to safety belts and child restraint systems.

What is the fee for a driver's license?

Please refer to www.dmv.ri.gov for the most up-to-date fee table.

What happens if my license or registration is suspended?

License suspensions are addressed by appointment only at the Adjudication Office within the DMV. Although there are many reasons why a driving privilege may be suspended, the most common reasons are for failure to pay a traffic fine, committing an infraction that include mandatory suspension time, or a suspension request from another state. **You are not** required to turn in your license to the DMV if your license is suspended. Keep your license with you for identity purposes.

A license suspension will affect you in the following ways:

1. You cannot legally drive a motor vehicle in Rhode Island or any other state for any reason during the suspension period.
2. Your motor vehicle violations have become a matter of public record. They are open to public inspection by insurance companies and other interested parties. As a result, your insurance rates may be subject to increase.

E. Summary: Rhode Island's Graduated Licensing System

The following is a summary of the three previously described levels of licensing.

To receive a LIMITED LEARNER PERMIT, you must:

1. Be sixteen (16) to eighteen (18) years of age.
2. Successfully complete the Rhode Island Driver Education thirty-three (33) hour class administered by CCRI or its equivalent.
3. Apply for a limited Learner permit at the DMV in the company of a parent, guardian, adult spouse, or licensed foster parent.

Under a Limited Learner Permit, you are permitted to drive a motor vehicle under the following conditions:

1. The permit holder must be in possession of the permit.
2. A supervising driver must be seated beside the permit holder in the front seat of the vehicle when it is in motion (a supervising driver is defined as a properly licensed driver who has held a license for at least five (5) years and is over twenty-one (21) years old.
3. No person other than the supervising driver is located in the front seat of automobile.
4. Every person occupying the vehicle is properly fastened by a seat belt or child restraint system.

To receive a LEARNER'S PROVISIONAL LICENSE, you must:

1. Have held a limited Learner permit for at least six (6) months without any conviction of motor vehicle moving violations or seat belt infractions during the previous six (6) months.
2. Pass the motor vehicle driving skills test administered by the DMV. If the owner of the vehicle used for the driving skills test is not present, a notarized letter from the owner giving permission to use the vehicle for this purpose must be presented to the DMV examiner. In addition, the vehicle must be actively inspected and insured.
3. Apply for the license at the DMV in the company of a parent, guardian, adult spouse, licensed foster parent, or driving instructor.
4. Must complete fifty (50) hours of supervised driving with a qualified supervising driver. The permitee must complete ten (10) of those hours at night.

Under a LEARNER'S PROVISIONAL LICENSE, you are permitted to drive a motor vehicle under the following conditions:

1. The license holder must be in possession of the Learner's Provisional License.
2. At any time with a supervising driver seated beside the provisional license holder in the front seat of the vehicle when it is in motion.
3. Without supervision in any of the following circumstances: from 5:00 AM to 1:00 AM, when driving to or from work, or when driving to or from an activity of a volunteer fire department, rescue squad or emergency medical service (if the driver is a member of such organization).
4. Every person occupying the vehicle is properly fastened by a safety belt or child restraint system.
5. During the first twelve (12) months of the learner's provisional license, no more than one (1) licensed passenger younger than twenty-one (21) years of age is allowed in the vehicle. Immediate family/household members are exempt from this rule.

To receive a FULL OPERATOR'S LICENSE, you must:

1. Be between seventeen (17) years, six (6) months and eighteen (18) years of age.
2. Have held a Learner Provisional License for at least twelve (12) months and be free of any convictions for motor vehicle moving violation or safety belt infraction for the previous six (6) months.
3. Apply for this license in the company of a parent, guardian, adult spouse, or licensed foster parent.
4. With a full operator's license, you may drive a motor vehicle without restrictions concerning time of driving, supervision, and a passenger limitation.

F. Out-of-State Drivers: Obtaining a Rhode Island Driver's License

If you have a valid driver's license in another state, and you have just moved to Rhode Island, you can apply to have your license transferred to a Rhode Island Driver's License. If your license to operate a motor vehicle is suspended in any other state, you must address this issue with that state prior to applying for a Rhode Island license. If your out-of-state license is currently valid or has not been expired for more than five (5) years, you will not be required to take a computerized knowledge exam or a driving skills test.

If you have previously held a Rhode Island license, and it has not expired for more than five (5) years, you will not be required to take a computerized knowledge exam or a driving skills test.

Any restrictions or endorsements you may have had on your out-of-state license (for example, a motorcycle endorsement) will be transferred to your new Rhode Island license with an equivalent restriction/endorsement.

To apply for an out-of-state transfer, you must complete and submit an Application for First License. You must also submit the required documents, as stated in G, Identification Requirements and Acceptable Documents. Please be sure that you have acceptable proof of Rhode Island residency before applying to transfer your license. Upon applying for the transfer, you must also present and surrender your out-of-state license.

The license will be valid for up to two years, expiring on your second birthday from the time you obtain your Rhode Island license. At that time, you many renew your license for five (5) years. Please refer to www.dmv.ri.gov for the most up-to-date fee table.

II. The Effects of Distractions, Drowsiness, and Emotions on Driving

A. Distracted Driving

Driving requires your full attention.

Alcohol and other drugs are not the only factors that can cause a driver to be impaired. Driver distraction and inattention are also major causes of impairment, resulting in thousands of collisions and deaths each year. Consider these facts:

- An estimated 60 percent of collisions involve some form of driver inattention. (NHTSA)
- Each year, driver inattention is a factor in more than 1 million crashes in North America.
- Looking away from the path of travel for two or more seconds doubles the likelihood of a crash.
- Young drivers are especially susceptible to becoming distracted while driving.
- Every state has legislation under which drivers can be charged for inattentive driving.

Inattention and distraction.



Distraction results when a situation, event or person draws a driver's focus away from driving. Inattention, on the other hand, occurs when a driver's attention drifts away from driving without having been influenced by a situation, event, or person. Both can result in the same outcome — a collision. When you drive, you are already multitasking. Do not make it more difficult by performing additional tasks while behind the wheel.

Effects of distraction.

It does not take long to become distracted, and a lot can happen in a second or two. Distractions can affect driving performance in at least three ways:

1. **Slowed perception.** Distracted driving may cause drivers to be delayed in perceiving or completely fail to perceive an important traffic event. For example, a distracted driver may fail to perceive another vehicle pulling out of a parking lot directly into his or her path of travel.
2. **Delayed decision-making.** Distraction can cause a driver's decision-making process to be delayed or cause a driver to choose an action inappropriate for the situation at hand. For example, a distracted driver may not decide quickly enough on a specific course of action to avoid a collision.
3. **Improper action.** Once drivers make a decision, they need to execute the chosen action. Distraction can cause drivers to be delayed in taking the intended action, or to make incorrect inputs to the steering, accelerator, or brakes. For example, a distracted driver who decides to change direction in response to sudden blockage of the lane ahead may turn the steering wheel too slowly or too late to avoid a collision.

Types of distractions.

Some are more obvious than others. When windshield wipers were first introduced on vehicles at the beginning of the last century, they were considered a distraction. Today, we would not drive without them. There are many causes of distraction, all with the potential to increase risk.

Distractions can be physical, mental, visual, or auditory in nature and are often a combination of all. A **physical distraction** is one that causes a driver to take their hands off the wheel, such as reaching for an object. **Mental distractions** are activities that take the driver's mind away from the road, such as engaging in conversation with a passenger or thinking about something that happened during the day. **Visual distractions** cause the driver to take their eyes off the road, such as checking the navigation system. **Auditory distractions** are any noise that takes away our attention from driving, such as listening to music at a high volume, a remote conversation, or electronic communication device notifications. All increase the risk of a collision. When physical, mental, visual, and auditory distractions are combined, there is an even greater chance a crash could happen.

Distractions inside the vehicle.

There are many potential causes of distractions related to events and objects inside the vehicle. Some of these include:

- **Passengers:** Other occupants' behavior can be very distracting to the driver, especially for young drivers. Research shows that for each additional passenger, the risk of a collision increases dramatically. Specifically, for teen drivers, the addition of just one teen passenger doubles the likelihood of experiencing a fatal crash. With two or more teen passengers, the risk of a fatal crash jumps by 300 percent.
- **Adjusting the radio/podcast apps:** Many young drivers enjoy listening to the radio/podcast apps while driving. However, research shows that each time a driver adjusts the radio/podcast apps, the risk of a collision increases. Adjustments to the radio/podcast apps could include changing a CD, selecting a song from an MP3 player, podcast app, or changing the radio station. All these functions involve taking the driver's hands off the steering wheel, eyes off the road, or both.
- **Reaching for a moving loose object:** Similarly, research shows that teens are especially vulnerable to collisions when reaching for a loose object. This frequently involves taking eyes off the road.
- **Using a wireless communication device (cellular phone):** Using a wireless communication device phone while driving can be extremely risky. While using a wireless device might seem simple, it requires significant concentration that takes attention away from the driving task. It is estimated that use of these devices' accounts for approximately 3,200 motor vehicle fatalities and 300,000 collisions each year. Overall risk of a collision while using a wireless communication device increases by 400 percent.

Young drivers are especially vulnerable to becoming distracted while using a wireless communication device. Additionally, modern wireless communication devices are capable of far more than spoken communication; many can perform navigational functions, access the Internet, share photos, and send and receive text messages. As such, today's wireless communication devices hold even more potential for increased risk while driving.

Dialing: While it may not take long to dial a phone number, doing so may require a driver to remove one hand from the steering wheel and look down at the phone's keypad.

Talking and listening: Holding a conversation requires mental effort, which diverts attention away from driving. One study indicated that talking on a wireless communication device was over four times more likely to cause a near crash than the next-most frequent cause of distraction. Drivers talking on wireless communication devices frequently vary their speed and weave along the roadway.

Hand-held versus hands-free*:* Some drivers choose to use a headset that eliminates the need to physically hold a wireless communication device. While a hands-free device may initially appear to be less distracting, research indicates no differences in risk between the two modes. Both methods of use are fully capable of diverting a driver's attention so much that it may result in a collision.

Text messaging*:* Text messaging is the common term for sending short (160 or fewer characters) text messages from cell phones. Faster than email, cell phone users receive incoming text messages almost immediately after they are sent. Evidence suggests that text messaging is even riskier than talking on a cell phone, as text messaging often requires the driver to both look at the phone and manipulate the keypad with one's hands.



- **Navigating:** Every driver has a destination and driving an unfamiliar route can be challenging enough without being distracted. Using a map while driving can cause distraction, not to mention significant reductions in visibility. Even drivers who use an electronic navigation system can become distracted.
- **Other internal distractions:** Additional causes of distractions inside the vehicle include eating, drinking, grooming, adjusting vehicle controls such as climate systems, and attending to pets.

Distractions outside the vehicle.

Distractions can also be caused by objects, people, and events outside the vehicle. These could include:

- **Crash scenes:** It can be tempting to reduce speed and divert attention to a nearby crash scene. Sometimes this is referred to as "accident gawking."
- **Emergency vehicles:** Emergency vehicles are often present at crash scenes or to deliver roadside assistance. With their flashing lights and other warning devices, they can easily divert a driver's eyes from the path of travel.
- **Objects:** There are many objects outside the vehicle that could compete for a driver's attention, including other vehicles, pedestrians, road debris, collisions and billboards and other signs. Some signs may electronically alternate among different messages, and thus be even more likely to catch a driver's eye. Construction zones may contain unusual vehicles or machinery that can also divert a driver's attention.
- **Animals:** On certain types of roadways, animals are more likely to cross into the path of travel. Often, animals move very quickly onto the roadway, surprising the unwary driver. Even if there is no risk of colliding with an animal, it may still draw a driver's attention away from the roadway.
- **Other roadway users:** Although full-size motor vehicles are the most common users of the roadway, other users could attract a driver's attention. These could include horse-drawn buggies, motorcycles, scooters, bicycles, and pedestrians.
- **Eyes off the road:** Regardless of the cause of distraction, drivers can be tempted to look away from the roadway. While this might appear harmless, it is actually very risky. When a driver looks away from the roadway for two or more seconds, the risk of a collision doubles. The bottom line: regardless of what may be occurring that could draw your attention and vision away from the road, keep your eyes on your intended path of travel.

B. Preventing and Managing Distractions

Preventing and managing distractions.

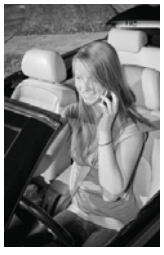
The key to preventing becoming distracted is to prepare as much as possible before you drive. With a little forethought, you can anticipate potential distractions and address them before getting behind the wheel. Despite your best efforts, distractions can arise while driving. Handling distractions effectively is critical to minimizing your risk. Techniques for preventing and managing distractions include:

- Familiarize yourself with your vehicle's features and equipment before you get behind the wheel.
- Preset radio stations, podcast app playlist, and climate control.
- Secure items that may move around when the car is in motion.
- Do not text message, access the internet, watch video, play video games, search MP3 devices, or use any other distracting technology while driving.
- Avoid smoking, eating, drinking, and reading while driving.
- Review maps and driving directions before operating your motor vehicle.
- Pull safely off the road and out of traffic to attend to children or passengers.
- Monitor traffic conditions before engaging in activities that could divert attention away from driving.
- Ask a passenger to help you with activities that may be distracting.
- Recognizing driving requires your full attention. If you find your mind wandering, remind yourself to stay focused on the road.

Wireless Communication Device (Cell Phone/Smartwatch).

The first tip is: Do not use a wireless communication device while driving. But if you must:

- Familiarize yourself with the features of your wireless communication device before you get behind the wheel.
- Use message-taking functions and return calls when you are stopped at a safe location.



- Use the wireless communication device only when necessary. Limit casual conversations to times when you are not operating a motor vehicle.
- Plan your conversation in advance and keep it short — especially in hazardous conditions such as inclement weather or heavy traffic.
- Let the person you are speaking with know you are driving.
- Emotions can impact a driver's ability to safely operate a motor vehicle. Pull off the road to a safe spot before continuing this type of conversation.
- Do not combine distracting activities such as talking on your wireless communication device while driving, eating, and adjusting the audio system.
- Ask a passenger in the car to place the call for you and, if possible, speak in your place.
- Secure your wireless communication device in the car so that it does not become a projectile object in a crash.

Remember, driving requires your full attentiveness.

You have learned it involves more than controlling the vehicle and keeping it on the road. Driving involves searching where you plan to go, identifying problems and potential conflicts, making decisions on what you perceive, judging what may occur and carrying out appropriate actions. To do all of this competently and safely you must stay focused and avoid distractions. When you do anything else while you are driving, you increase risk to yourself and others.



C. Drowsy Driving

Drowsiness.

Drowsiness while driving is a condition that affects everyone at one time or another. As drivers become tired, their ability to drive becomes impaired, and the risk of a collision rises. Driving while drowsy is dangerous because your senses and abilities become impaired. You may not see objects clearly, or in a timely manner. You may miss critical information — signs, lights, and sounds. It may also take you longer to process the information you take in or to make decisions in potential high-risk situations. You may misjudge speed and distances. In sum, drowsiness can affect every process involved in safe driving.

The risks.

Drowsy driving is one of the leading causes of traffic collisions. In 2020, NHTSA estimates that 100,000 police-reported crashes each year are the direct result of drowsy driving. This results in an estimated 800 deaths, 50,000 injuries.

Unfortunately, driving while drowsy is not rare. In fact, according to the National Sleep Foundation's *Sleep in America* poll, 60 percent of adult drivers say they have driven a vehicle while feeling drowsy in the past year. 1 in 25 drivers have admitted to falling asleep while driving. More than one in five fatal collisions involve a drowsy driver. Drivers may experience short bursts of sleep lasting only a few seconds (microsleeps) or fall asleep for a longer period of time. Either way, the chance of a collision increases dramatically.

Who is at risk?

Many drivers are at increased risk of becoming drowsy behind the wheel, including:

1. **Drivers on long trips.** Drivers could become fatigued while driving on long trips. Some drivers attempt to drive longer than they should on any given day.
2. **Drivers lacking sleep.** Drivers who are sleep deprived are more likely to fall asleep behind the wheel. According to the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, drivers may underestimate their drowsiness, leading them to stay behind the wheel instead of stopping for a 15–20-minute rest. Driving while drowsy is a dangerous form of impairment and does not improve with continued driving.
3. **Drivers with undiagnosed or untreated sleep disorders.** Drivers with sleep disorders are more likely to fall asleep while driving. Untreated disorders such as sleep apnea (stoppage of breathing due to soft-tissue blockage of the airway), narcolepsy (the inability to remain awake) and others can cause serious sleep

disruption and uncontrolled nodding or falling asleep at the wheel. If you experience frequent daytime drowsiness, often have difficulty sleeping at night, and/or snore every night, consult your physician.

4. **Drivers on the road during the body's natural "low" times.** Each person's alertness, energy and sleep likelihood rise and falls throughout the day. This is referred to as the body's "circadian rhythm," the pattern of energy throughout a 24-hour period. Most people experience "lows" between midnight and 6 a.m. and again between approximately 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.
5. **Drivers on the road after extended wakefulness.** Remaining awake for extended periods of time can significantly increase drowsiness and its impact on driving ability. Research shows that being awake for 20 hours produces impairment equal to a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .05 percent. After 24 hours awake, the impairment rises to equal to a BAC of .10 percent.
6. **Young drivers.** Drivers under age 30 are involved in over two-thirds of all fall-asleep crashes. Additionally, these drivers are four times more likely to experience a sleep related crash than drivers aged 30 and older.
7. **Shift workers.** Drivers who work late-night or early-morning shifts are more likely to fall asleep while driving. Working the night shift increases collision risk by nearly six times. Rotating-shift workers and people working more than 60 hours a week need to be particularly careful.

Other causes of drowsiness.

Emotional stress, illness or boredom can cause drowsiness. Sun glare, a major factor in eyestrain, can also contribute to fatigue. Overeating, drinking alcoholic beverages, drug use or riding in a warm passenger compartment can all affect the likelihood of becoming drowsy.

Monotony, related to Fatigue.

Driving on an empty, straight road with no signals or billboards may seem like a simple task. Yet there is often not enough stimulation in the environment to keep you mentally alert. Compound this with the engine's constant purr, the hum of the tires, the tendency to fix your eyes on a single point ahead and the general monotony of easy vehicle operation, and mental alertness drops. Under such circumstances, a driver is much more likely to doze off than when on a more difficult and demanding road.

How can you tell if you are at risk of drowsy driving?

There is no guarantee that you will recognize when you are at risk of driving fatigued behind the wheel. One half of drivers who crashed after falling asleep did not detect *any* signs of drowsiness before the crash. Be aware that there may be no warning before falling asleep, but recognize any warning signs that you may detect, including:

- Difficulty focusing, frequent blinking or heavy eyelids.
- Yawning repeatedly or rubbing your eyes.
- Daydreaming; wandering/disconnected thoughts.
- Trouble remembering the last few miles driven; missing exits or traffic signs.
- Trouble keeping your head up.
- Drifting from your lane, following too closely, or hitting a shoulder rumble strip.
- Feeling restless and irritable.

Preventing drowsy driving.

To help prevent becoming drowsy, take the following steps before driving:

- Get adequate sleep daily. While this varies from individual to individual, sleep experts recommend between 7 to 9 hours of sleep per night for adults and 8 to 10 hours for teens.
- Prepare your route carefully to identify total distance, stopping points and other logistic considerations.
- Plan to drive long trips with a companion driver. Passengers can help look for early warning signs of fatigue or take over driving when needed. At least one passenger should stay awake to talk to the driver.
- Avoid medications (over the counter and prescribed) that cause drowsiness or otherwise impair performance.

Once you are on the road.

To help maintain your alertness while driving:

- Protect yourself from glare and eyestrain with sunglasses.
- Avoid heavy foods.
- Be aware of your physiological down time during the day (circadian rhythm).
- Have another companion driver (take out person) person ride with you and take turns driving.
- Take periodic breaks. A good rule of thumb is to stop every 100 miles or every two hours.

On long trips, stopping periodically can temporarily offset fatigue. You should be able to drive a reasonable distance without difficulty if you stop for at least 10 minutes every two hours or every 100 miles and make regular stops for fuel, food, and restrooms. The concern with long-distance driving is that many people do not know, or choose to ignore, how much driving is too much. There is no rule to say how far you should drive at any given time, but no destination is worth the risk and consequences of drowsy driving. Do not overextend yourself. Determine a reasonable distance in advance and stop driving when you reach it.

Ineffective actions.

The following actions will not help prevent drowsiness longer than just a few minutes:

- Trying to tough it out.
- Playing music at high volume.
- Driving at a faster or slower speed.
- Chewing gum or eating.
- Opening the windows/sunroof.
- Products with caffeine
- Smoking products
- Turning up the AC

Rest is the key.

Remember, resting is by far the most effective way, and the only recovery strategy to counter drowsiness. It is not safe to sleep in a vehicle at the side of the road. Yet there may be times when it is better to pull off than continue driving. If you must stop along the roadway to rest, follow these practices:

- Stop at a roadside area where security is present. If no such facility is available, make sure that you are as far off the highway as possible.
- After dark, find a populated, lighted area.
- Give yourself a little outside air but be sure that the windows are closed enough to prevent entry from outside.
- Lock all doors and turn off your engine.
- Turn on parking lights and turn off other electrical equipment.
- After you rest, if safe to do so, get out of the vehicle and walk a few minutes to be sure that you are completely awake before you begin to drive again. Keep in mind that sleeping for more than 20 minutes can make you groggy for at least five minutes after awakening.

D. Emotions

Feelings.

It is natural for us to attach meaning and feelings to things we do. Strong emotions such as fear and anger can affect the way we perceive and process information. Therefore, emotions can — and do — affect the way we drive. Studies have shown the most critical factor in driver performance, regardless of training, is an individual's self-awareness and ability to interact with other people.

Causes.

Many situations lead a driver to become emotionally stressed. A person who has just received news of a serious

illness or death of a close friend or family member may be to upset to operate a vehicle safely. What about the person who has an argument, jumps into a vehicle, and drives off, or the person who is excited or disappointed at the end of a closely played ball game? It may be easy to lose control of our emotions under such circumstances. You also can become frustrated or impatient when you wait in long lines of traffic or follow a slowly moving vehicle along a winding roadway.

Effects of emotions.

When emotionally upset, a driver's typical response to common traffic situations can change. Strong emotions affect our ability to think, reason and make decisions. The upset or emotionally charged driver may look directly at a traffic light or stop sign and drive through it. That same person also may follow too closely and pass on hills or curves. Emotions can draw a driver's attention away from driving, reduce concentration on the roadway and impair the ability to process information and take necessary actions. While positive emotions, like feeling overly happy and excited, can certainly cause impairment, negative emotions such as anger and frustration may affect driving safety to an even greater degree.

E. Aggressive Driving and Road Rage

Aggressive driving.

Aggressive driving occurs when a driver operates a vehicle in a pushy or bold manner. Exceeding the speed limit, following too closely, failing to comply with traffic controls devices, and making improper turns and maneuvers are all examples of aggressive driving.

Road rage.

Road rage occurs when a driver uses the vehicle or some other weapon to threaten or cause harm to another roadway user in response to a traffic incident. Road rage is an escalation of emotions generally ignited by aggressive driving behaviors. Drivers who drive aggressively are more likely to allow their emotions to overwhelm self-control and engage in road rage. Examples of road rage include throwing objects at a vehicle, yelling at a specific roadway user and attempting to ram another vehicle.

F. Guidelines to Controlling Emotions

Self-control.

Since strong emotional responses are learned, you also can learn to control them. The following guidelines may help you keep emotions from unduly affecting your driving abilities:

- **Understand your own emotional makeup.** Limited self-awareness may be the cause of fear or other strong emotional responses. The more you know about yourself and why you act a certain way, the better you can control your actions. If you can predict the emotional responses of other drivers, you can better prepare your responses.
- **Identify situations that tend to upset you.** People tend to become excited, afraid, or angry when they are faced with threatening situations. If a situation can be handled easily or does not concern you, it is not likely to lead to your being upset, and you can prepare for it more effectively. Effective trip planning can prevent numerous problems. Many traffic situations are frustrating because we fail to allow enough time for trips. In contrast, the pleasure of driving generally increases when friends are along.
- **Expect other drivers to make mistakes.** The more you drive, the more you will realize that all drivers make mistakes. They may be distracted or inattentive. Other drivers may not have developed the skill or obtained the knowledge for save vehicle operation. You need to realize that others' mistakes may be ones that you have made or may make in the future.
- **Emotions are contagious.** Quite often, one emotion leads to another. If you yell at another person, they could become angry and take their anger out on someone else. That person, in turn, may get mad and take it out on someone else. The same thing can happen in traffic situations. Realize that smiles and courtesy can be spread among drivers just as easily as frustrations and anger can. If you know what to expect, you can plan to overcome the errors and frustrations of others.
- **Direct your emotions to actions rather than the individual.** It is easy to become frustrated with another person or driver without knowing exactly why. Drivers have different goals. Some drivers may be

in a hurry. Remember, that other drivers do not know your goals or have anything against you.

- **Delay driving when upset.** Most emotional upsets are temporary. If you must drive, wait until the strength of the emotion has faded so that you are more likely to drive safely and courteously.
- **Unwind.** When an upset occurs while you are driving, find a place to stop and unwind. Take a short walk. Take a few deep breaths. You might choose such a time to stop for refreshments.
- **Ask someone else to drive.** Emotional upsets such as grief and anxiety may last several days. If a driver feels depressed or any other significant emotion, it may be wise to have another person drive. In some cases, it may be best to use public transportation.

G. Preventing Aggressive Driving and Road Rage

One key to preventing aggressive driving and road rage is to avoid engaging in them yourself and trying not to give other roadway users cause to become aggressive. These guidelines can help:

- **Show courtesy and consideration to other road users, even when they are not courteous to you**.
- Leave plenty of time to reach your destination.
- Always remain calm. Listening to soothing music can help.
- Maintain adequate distance between you and the vehicle ahead. Following too closely can easily cause the driver being followed to become frustrated.
- Avoid changing lanes unnecessarily.
- Do not block the passing lane. Except when passing, stay out of the far-left lane.
- Always use your turn signals before changing lanes.
- Be sure you have plenty of room between you and other vehicles.
- Avoid using aggressive or offensive hand gestures when communicating with other drivers.
- Use your horn sparingly. A couple of short taps may be perceived as less aggressive than one long blast.
- Do not park across multiple parking spaces. Be sure not to touch adjacent vehicles either while parking, or with another vehicle's doors as you enter or exit your vehicle.
- When using high-beam headlights, return to using low-beam headlights as soon as you detect an oncoming vehicle. Do not drive behind another vehicle with your high-beam headlights on.
- If safe to do so, move out of the right-hand lane to allow vehicles entering the roadway to merge with minimal difficulty.

H. Responding to Aggressive Driving and Road Rage

Unfortunately, sometimes other drivers become aggressive or enraged. If you are confronted by a driver displaying aggressive behaviors toward you, follow these guidelines:

- Do not respond to the other driver. Avoid any escalation of conflict.
- Remain calm and take a deep breath.
- Avoid eye contact with the other driver or passengers.
- Be tolerant and forgiving. Try personalizing the other driver — the other driver may be having a difficult day and be looking for a way to vent anger.
- Be polite and courteous, even if the other driver is not. Your behavior may help reduce their anger.
- Be sure to allow enough room around your vehicle so that you can pull out or around if someone approaches your vehicle.
- Do not get out of your vehicle — it offers protection.
- If necessary, contact 911 for assistance.
- If necessary, drive to a busy public place where there are witnesses, such as a hospital, fire station or busy convenience store or gas station. Once there, sound your horn to attract others' attention, if needed.

Avoid conflict.
As you drive, your goal is to avoid conflict. Realize that other drivers' mistakes are not directed at you personally, so do not take them personally. Be as polite in your driving as you would be in any other social situation. If another driver challenges you, do not get out of your vehicle. Just as in a crash, your vehicle can give you protection. Do not lose that protection by getting out. You do not control traffic or the actions of others, but you

do control your reaction to it.

III. Basic Driving Skills and Safety Rules

A. Before Starting The Engine

Most motorists can drive safely for years by using care, courtesy, and caution. **Most motor vehicle collisions are caused by errors of the driver** and occur within a few miles of people's homes. Before entering your vehicle, check in front and behind the vehicle for objects, animals, or persons in your path. Safe driving starts before you turn on the engine. Please take the following steps every time you get in your vehicle:

1. Lock the doors
2. Key in ignition/key fob in vehicle
3. Adjust the seat
4. Adjust the inside and outside mirrors
5. Adjust ventilation
6. Fasten and adjust your seat belts
7. Ask passengers to fasten their seat belts
8. Adjust your feet to the pedals
9. Adjust the steering wheel
10. Adjust the head restraint
11. Adjust your audio system, radio, podcast app., etc.

B. Rhode Island Safety Belt/Child Restraint Law

The Seat Belt Use Law is a *primary law* for all ages, meaning you can be pulled over if anyone is unbuckled.

Safety Belt Use Law – Rhode Island General Law ("R.I.G.L.") 31-22-22:

1. 31-22-22 (f): Any operator of a motor vehicle transporting a person eighteen (18) years of age and older in any seating position of a motor vehicle operated on the roadways, streets or highways of this state shall ensure that the person be properly wearing a safety belt and/or shoulder harness system, as defined by Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 208.
2. 31-22-22 (g): Any person who is an operator of a motor vehicle shall be properly wearing a safety belt and/or shoulder harness system as defined by Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 208 while the vehicle is in operation on any of the roadways, streets, or highways of this state.
3. Vehicle operator is responsible for compliance of sections (f) and (g). The fine for violation of this section is $40.00 per occupant.

Child Restraint Law – R.I.G.L. 31-22-22:

1. 31-22-22 (a): Any person transporting a child under the age of eight (8), less than fifty-seven (57) inches (4 ½ feet tall) in height and less than eighty (80) pounds in a motor vehicle operated on the roadways, streets, or highways of this state, shall transport the child in any rear seating position of the motor vehicle properly restrained in a child restraint system approved by the United States Department of Transportation under Federal Standard 213. If the child is under eight (8) years old but at least fifty-seven (57) inches in height, or at least eighty (80) pounds the child shall be properly wearing a safety belt and/or shoulder harness approved by the Department of Transportation pursuant to Federal Standard 208 in any rear seating position of the motor vehicle.
2. 31-22-22 (b)(1): Any operator of a motor vehicle transporting a child who has attained the age of eight (8) years but is under eighteen (18) years of age in any seating position within a motor vehicle operated on the roadways, streets, or highways of the state shall ensure that the passenger is properly wearing a safety belt and/or shoulder harness system, as defined by Federal Standard 208.

3. 31-22-22 (b)(2): Any operator of a motor vehicle under eighteen (18) years of age shall properly wear a safety belt and/or shoulder harness system. Exceptions: Children under age eight (8) years old are exempt from being transported in any ear seating position if:
   - the vehicle has no backseat (i.e., pickup truck, sports car, etc.)
   - all rear seating positions are already being utilized by other children.
   - In 31-22-22 (b), as described above, the oldest child should ride in the front seat if the vehicle is equipped with a passenger side airbag.

4. Penalty: The fine, after a violation is sustained, for a child riding in the front seat or for a child over age seven (7) years not in a child restraint system is $85.00. A violation for transporting a child not in a child restraint system mandates a court appearance.

Booster Seat/Safety Seat/Safety Belt Use Law – R.I.G.L. 31-22-22:

1. **Infants:**
   - Birth to at least a minimum of age two **(2)** years old or at **least 30 lbs.**
   - Rear-facing only and/or convertible car seat.
   - Back seats use only.

2. **Toddlers:**
   - A minimum of two **(2)** years old or thirty 30 lbs. or to the car seat manufacturer's maximum recommended weight for rear facing. If the child is still under 2 years of age and under 30 lbs., child must remain rear facing.
   - Forward-facing convertible car seat only after child has reached 2 years of age. Recommend child stay rear facing as long as possible.
   - Back seats use only.

3. **Children under eight (8) years of age:**
   - Less than eighty (80) lbs. and/or less than fifty-seven (57) inches.
   - Booster seat or safety harness.
   - Back seats use only.

4. **Children under eighteen (18) years of age:**
   - Lap/shoulder seat belt.
   - Properly placed on upper thighs across the hip bones and across middle of chest.
   - Back seat. Safest place for airbag safety.

5. **Drivers and passengers eighteen (18) years of age and older:**
   - Lap/shoulder seat belt.
   - Properly placed on upper thighs across the hip bones and across middle of chest.

6. **Does your child need a booster seat?**
   Take the five (5) step seat belt fit test. Did you know most children need a booster seat from the age of four (4) to at least between the ages of eight (8) and twelve (12). If your child is not riding in a booster seat, then take the five (5) step seat belt test:

   - Is the child's lower back all the way against the vehicle seat?
   - Do the child's knees bend at the edge of the vehicle seat?
   - Does the shoulder belt come down over the collar bone and across the center of the chest?
   - Is the lap belt on the upper thighs across the hip bones?
   - Can the child stay seated like this for the entire trip?

IF YOUR ANSWER TO ANY OF THESE QUESTIONS IS 'NO', THEN YOUR CHILD NEEDS A BOOSTER SEAT TO RIDE SAFELY IN THE VEHICLE. BOOSTER SEATS MUST BE USED WITH A LAP/SHOULDER HARNESS SYSTEM!

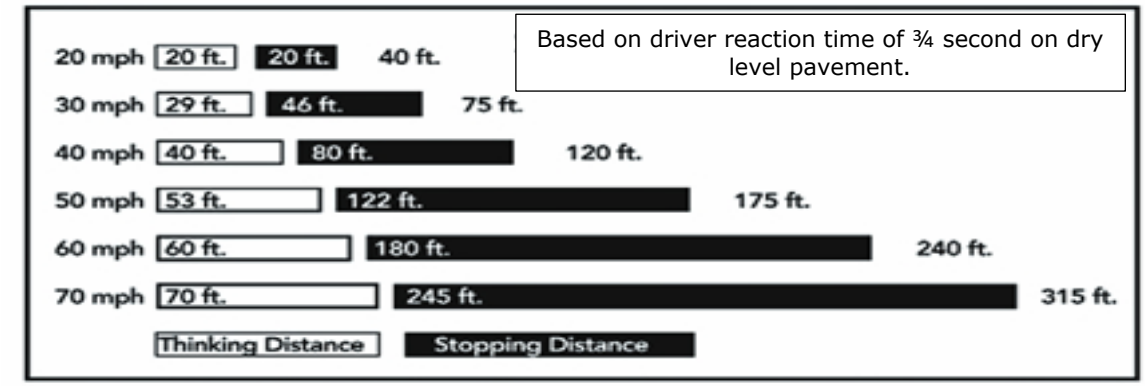


C. Stopping Your Vehicle

Even when road and vehicle conditions are ideal and the driver is perfectly alert, it takes a great distance to stop a motor vehicle. To stop your vehicle, three (3) things must happen:

1. You must **perceive** (recognize) the danger and the need to stop.
2. Your brain must **react** to the hazard and tell your foot to step on the brake.
3. Your foot must move to the brake pedal and operate the brake (**braking)**.

The distance your vehicle travels between the time you recognize the danger and react to it is called your **perception distance**. The distance your vehicle travels when you move to step on the brake is called your **reaction distance**. After seeing danger, it takes the average driver about ¾ of a second to apply the brake. The higher the driving speed, the further your vehicle will travel before you are able to apply the brake.
The distance your vehicle travels from the time the brakes are applied to the time that the vehicle is brought to a stop is called **braking distance.** Braking distance will vary depending on the conditions of the road and level of traction. It is important to realize that on wet or icy roads the braking distance will be much longer because of reduced traction. Therefore, when driving in these conditions, you must drive slower. Oil, rubber, dirt, and water combine to make roads especially slippery when it first starts to rain.
The **perception distance** plus the **reaction distance** plus the **braking distance** equals the **total stopping distance.**

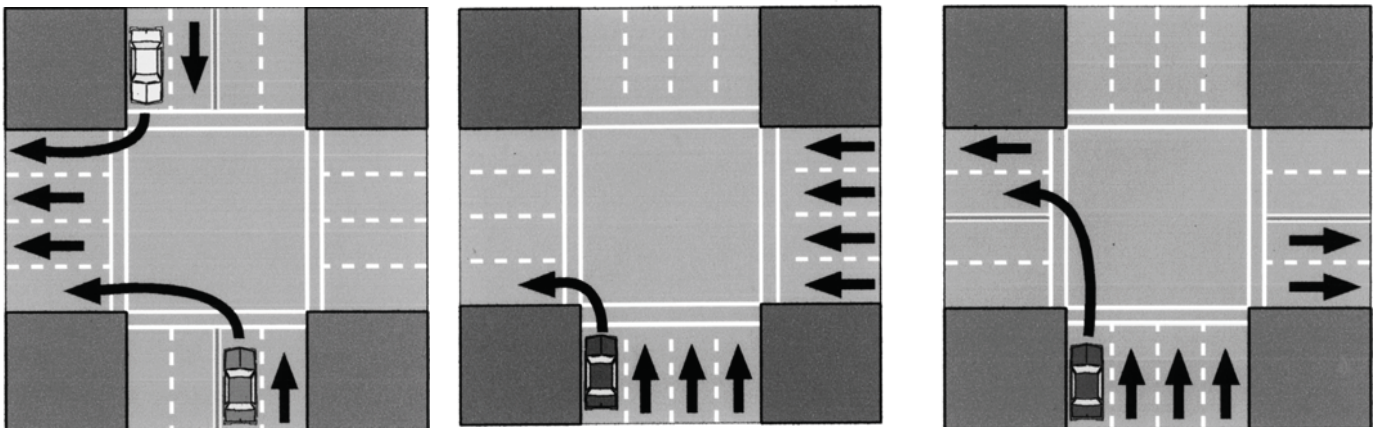


In addition, two (2) situations may occur which can prevent you from stopping when you need to:
Velocitizing occurs when you begin to feel that you are going slower than your actual speed. You can avoid this by varying your speed slightly when driving long distances on the highway. Use care while reducing your speed as you enter exit ramps.

Hydroplaning occurs when the front tires of your vehicle lose contact with the road surface on a wet road, and you lose steering capability. Guard against hydroplaning by keeping tire pressure inflated to manufacturer's recommended standard, reducing speed, and being careful while driving in the rain. Avoid areas with standing water and where water pools.

D. How To Turn

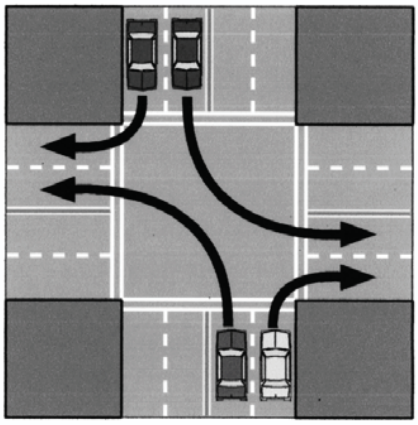
Making proper turns from proper lanes:



Twenty-two percent of all crashes occur when one vehicle is turning left. Most of these would not happen if the driver made the turn properly. Studies have shown that a motorist's greatest risk of a motor vehicle collision occurs at an intersection. Follow these steps to make a proper left turn:

1. Upon approaching an intersection at which you wish to make a left turn, you must give the proper signal in sufficient time to warn the driver of any vehicle behind you. As you gradually slow down, watch the mirror to see that the driver of the vehicle behind you has understood your signal. If the road is wide enough for you to do so without crossing the centerline, leave room for the following vehicles to pass you on your right. Be sure that no vehicle behind you is trying to pass on your left, and, above all, never pull suddenly to your left from the right-hand lane. If you can't work your way to the center early enough, go on to the next intersection.
2. As you approach the intersection, position yourself in lane position #2 far enough in advance before your turn.
3. When you reach the intersection, wait until the way is clear. Do not turn your wheels in your intended path of travel until you are clear to make your turn.
4. Both the motor vehicle directly approaching you and the vehicle approaching on your right have the right-of-way.
5. When the road is clear, make your turn at the proper speed and keep to the right of the center of the roadway. After turning into a four-lane road, keep driving in the center lane until you can change to the right lane without getting in the way of other vehicles.
6. Always yield the right-of-way to pedestrians in the street.
7. Cancel your directional.

Lane positioning for a right/left turn:



Follow these steps to make a proper right turn:

1. When you wish to make a right turn, you must first give the proper signal in sufficient time to warn the driver of any vehicle behind you.
2. Right turns must be taken from the extreme right-hand side of the road.
3. Do not develop the dangerous habit of swinging to the left before turning right. This is likely to make the driver of the vehicle following you assume you are going to turn left.

4. When you reach the intersection, wait until the way is clear. Do not turn your wheels in your intended path of travel until you are clear to make your turn.
5. The motor vehicle directly approaching you has the right-of-way.
6. When the road is clear, make your turn at the proper speed and keep to the right of the roadway.
7. Always yield the right-of-way to pedestrians in the street.
8. Cancel your directional.

The Basics of making a turn:

"A" Approach the turn; plan your path through the turn.
"B" Brake prior to the turn to reduce speed to a safe level.
"C" Continue into the first half of the turn, covering the brake (gentle pressure on the brake pedal) in case the need to apply the brakes arises.
"D" Drive out of the turn by accelerating at a safe, comfortable rate of speed.

E. Turnabouts

Turnabouts are maneuvers in which you may turn your car around to drive in the opposite direction.

You may be asked to perform a turnabout during your driving skills test. To plan your turnabout, you should make certain of the following:

- There are no signs which prohibit a turnabout, such as a *"No "U" Turn"* sign(s).
- You cannot cross a solid yellow line at any time.
- Local statutes may prohibit turnabouts; you should be familiar with local traffic regulations.
- You have clear visibility in each direction for a distance of five hundred (500) feet.
- There are no hills or curves nearby which could obstruct your view of on-coming traffic.
- You are at least two hundred (200) feet from an intersection.
- You have enough space to complete the maneuver.
- You are not in an area of heavy traffic.
- There are no pedestrians in your path.

You must then decide which turnabout you will use. There are four (4) types. You must choose the safest and best suited for traffic conditions and the street on which you will make your turnabout.

"U" turn:

- You must have sufficient space to complete this maneuver.
- Check for traffic in both directions.
- Signal that you will be pulling to the right curb and stop.
- Signal your intent with your left turn signal or turn on your four-way hazard lights.
- Check traffic in both directions.
- When you have a clear path, turn the steering wheel all the way to the left and slowly drive to the left, completing the maneuver.
- Make sure to cancel your directional signal or turn off the hazard lights upon completing your "U" turn.
- In Rhode Island, you may make a "U" turn only when it is allowed and does not interfere with the free flow of traffic in either direction.

Backing into a driveway or side-street on the right side:

- This turnabout allows you to reenter traffic by driving forward,
- Signal your intent to pull to the right side of the street,
- Drive past the street or driveway you plan to back into,
- Check for pedestrians and traffic in both direction and when clear,
- Begin to back up, slowly turning the steering wheel to the right.
- When you have completed your backing maneuver, straighten the steering wheel, and stop once you have cleared the curb line,
- After you have stopped on the side street or driveway, check for oncoming traffic, signal your intention to turn and if clear proceed by entering the main street again.

Pulling into a street or driveway on the left:

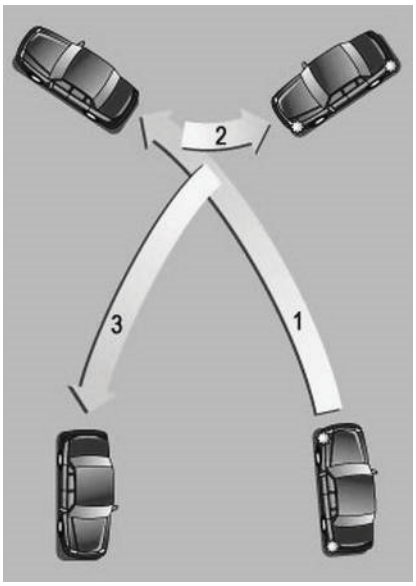
- This maneuver is more hazardous because you will be backing into the travel lane.

- Choose a street or driveway on the left which has clear visibility in both directions, when you have entered the street or driveway (the car has crossed the curb line), straighten the front wheels and stop,
- Look in both directions for pedestrian and vehicular traffic,
- Turn the steering wheel to the right and slowly backup into the first lane of travel,
- At about the half-way point in the turn, begin to straighten the steering wheel,
- After completing the turn, stop, check for on-coming traffic and when the path is clear, signal and enter the flow of traffic.

The three-point turn:

Unless prohibited, you may use the three-point turn to turn around on a narrow street,

- Select a safe location to make this maneuver,
- Signal your intent to pull to the right side of the street,
- After you have come to a complete stop, signal your intent with your left directional signal or with the four-way hazard lights,
- Check for on-coming traffic in both directions,
- Turn the steering wheel fully to the left and slowly drive forward, crossing the street,
- At a point before the left side curb, stop,
- Again, check for traffic in all directions,
- Turn the steering wheel fully to the right and begin to back up,
- When you have reached a point where the front of the car is in the middle of the street, stop,
- Again, check for traffic in all directions,
- Turn the steering wheel to the left and proceed in the opposite direction,
- Remember to turn off your directional signal or hazard lights.



BE CAREFUL WHEN MAKING THIS MANEUVER, WAIT FOR APPROACHING TRAFFIC TO PASS AND WATCH FOR PEDESTRIANS.

F. Stopping and Parking

Stopping

Stop: When stopping, drivers should completely cease all forward motion for a minimum of three seconds. This gives the driver time to look left, look right, look center, look left again, and proceed with caution.

Where to stop:

RIGL 31-20-9 Obedience to stop signs. – Every driver of a vehicle approaching a stop sign shall stop before entering the crosswalk on the near side of the intersection. In the event there is no crosswalk, the driver shall stop at a clearly marked stop line. If no stop line exists, then stop at the point nearest the intersecting highway where the driver has a view of approaching traffic on the intersecting highway before entering the intersection, except when directed to proceed by a police officer or traffic control signal.

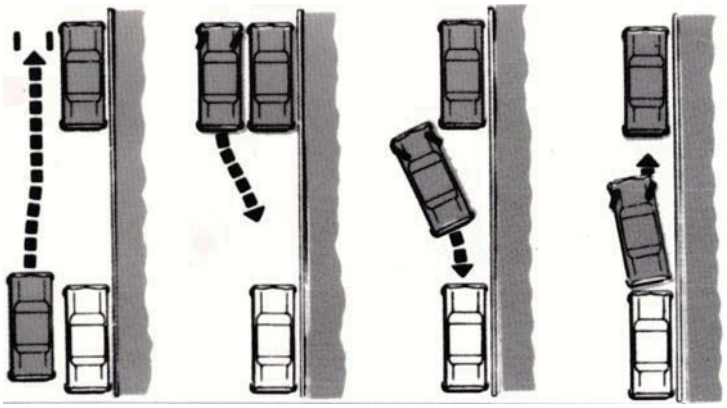
Four-Way Stops

Follow these procedures when at an intersection with a four-way stop:

- Once stopped, you must yield to all other vehicles that were stopped prior to your arrival at the stop sign.
- Once having stopped, all other vehicles arriving at the intersection after you must yield the right of way to you.
- If two vehicles arrive at the intersection at the same time, you must yield the right of way to the vehicle on your right.
- As always, being courteous and respectful will help prevent dangerous situations and make the roadways safer for all drivers.

To leave a traffic lane to enter a parking space/parallel parking (reword)

1. Move into the traffic lane nearest the parking space.
2. Use a turn signal to indicate your intentions.
3. Enter the parking space using the four (4) steps shown in the diagram below.
4. Stop the engine, lock the ignition switch, remove the key, and set the parking brake.



To enter a traffic lane from a parked position:

1. After starting the engine and releasing the parking brake, maneuver the vehicle to a position from which re-entry into the traffic lane can be made in one motion.
2. Look to the rear. Check the rear view and side view mirrors and look over your left shoulder to cover the blind spots.
3. Signal first, then drive from the parking spot carefully.
4. Enter the driving lane that is closest to the parking space.

How to park on hills:



Where you may not park or stop:

1. On the travel portion of the highway.
2. Beside a vehicle stopped or parked at the side of a street (Double Parking).
3. On a sidewalk.
4. Within an intersection.
5. Beside any roadwork so that you block traffic.
6. On a bridge or in a tunnel.
7. On any railroad tracks.
8. Any place where official signs prohibit stopping.
9. In front of any driveway.
10. Within 8 feet of a fire hydrant.
11. Within 20 feet of a crosswalk at an intersection.
12. Within 30 feet of a flashing red or yellow light, a stop sign, or a traffic light.
13. Within 20 feet of the driveway of a fire station or across the street within 75 feet of the driveway, where there are signs.
14. Any place where a sign says, 'No Parking'.
15. Within 50 feet of the nearest rail or a railroad crossing unless you stop for just a short time to load or unload passengers or packages.
16. At any curb cut or ramp for handicapped persons.

Unless a law prohibits parking, a vehicle parked on a two-lane road must have the right wheels a maximum of twelve (12) inches from the right side of the road or curb. On a one-way road, a parked vehicle may have either wheel a maximum of twelve (12) inches from the side of the road and headed in the same way the traffic goes.

G. Starting on a Hill

You may have to stop and start your vehicle on a hill. You will be instructed by the examiner to drive to the right side of the road, stop, and then set your parking brake and shift to neutral. The parking brake must hold the vehicle from rolling back.

When starting your vehicle on the hill, look over your left shoulder to be sure that traffic is clear, put the vehicle in gear, signal, release the parking brake and drive out carefully. In a vehicle with a standard shift, you should be able to drive up the hill without rolling back.

H. Starting from the Curb or Making a Safe Lane Change

1. **Is the lane clear?**
2. Signal your intent with sufficient time to warn other motorists of your (intent).
3. Check your mirrors and look over your shoulder to make sure the blind spots of the mirrors are clear and no other vehicle has entered your intended path.

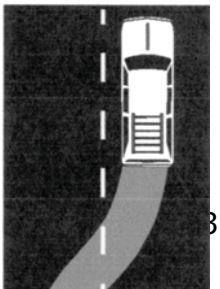
I. Entering the Roadway from a Private Road or Driveway

When entering the roadway from a private road or driveway, you must stop at the sidewalk before continuing to the curb line where you are mandated to stop again. Stopping at the sidewalk will allow you to check for pedestrians (on)in the sidewalk and stopping at the curb will allow you to check for oncoming traffic.

J. Passing Another Vehicle

When considering passing a vehicle ahead, ask yourself the following three (3) questions. All three (3) questions must be YES for you to justify passing:

1. ***Is Passing Legal?***
2. ***Is Passing Safe?***
3. ***Is Passing Worth it?***



Passing a vehicle on the left:

On multiple lane highways, the law requires you to use the left lane to pass and the right lane for through traffic or normal driving. When you are being passed by another vehicle, you should reduce your speed a little and keep to the right. This will allow the other driver to pass safely.

When approaching another vehicle from the rear and you want to pass, be sure you have sufficient distance to pass safely and check your blind spots. **Blind spots are areas that cannot be seen in your rear or side-view mirrors.** Before making any lane, changes or passing maneuvers, a motorist must check over his or her left or right shoulders to view the areas not visible in the mirrors. Avoid placing packages or other large items in the back seat or on the rear window ledge, which could cause a blind spot.

1. Give a left turn signal to let the driver ahead/behind you know that you will be pulling out.
2. Look to the rear through the rear view and side view mirrors and over your left shoulder to view any blind spots that may exist.
3. Proceed to change lanes and pass on the left.
4. Cancel your left turn signal.
5. At night it might be necessary to blink your headlights from low beam to high beam and back to low beam to warn the driver in front of you that you intend to pass.
5. When you have safely passed the vehicle, activate your right turn signal.
6. You should go far enough past the vehicle you are passing so that you are able to see the tires on the pavement of the vehicle you passed in your inside rear-view mirror. It will then be safe to return to the right side of the road.
7. In general, pass vehicles only on the left.
8. Never pass more than one (1) vehicle.
9. Never travel over the posted speed to pass a vehicle.

Passing a vehicle on the right:

A driver may pass on the right of another vehicle only as follows:

1. When the motor vehicle ahead is making or about to make a left turn
2. On a street or highway that is wide enough for two or more lanes of traffic with no obstructions and not occupied by parked vehicles.
3. On a one-way street or roadway wide enough for two or more lanes of traffic and free of obstructions or parked vehicles.

Under no conditions can you drive off the pavement or main traveled portion of the road to pass a motor vehicle. Passing on a hill, curve, railroad crossing, at an intersection, where signs prohibit, over solid lines, entering a tunnel or bridge, or over the posted speed limit is dangerous and may be the last mistake you make.

K. Proper Backing Procedures

- If you are backing up for a distance greater than 30 feet, it is recommended that you activate your hazard lights to warn other motorists of your maneuvers.
- While backing, you should look over your right shoulder, partially turning your body, while maintaining proper control of your vehicle.
- When backing in a straight line, you should periodically check all mirrors to be sure that no other vehicles, pedestrians, or obstacles are in your path of travel.

L. Freeway/Highway Driving Limited Access Highway

Highways have controlled areas, and traffic lights, and tend to be placed in rural areas and always allow you to drive off.

Freeways have higher speed limits and are a faster way to get from one city to the other with minimal traffic control.

Limited Access Highways are roads that have been built to allow traffic to move more freely. These roads include interstates and freeways that connect major cities, as well as state highways that connect smaller towns and cities.

The term "limited access" means that there are no intersections on these roads.

Driving on freeways can be easier than on other types of roads (no crossroads, traffic lights, or pedestrians) provided the motorist takes necessary precautions and remains alert. Because of the higher speeds of freeway traffic, you may be called upon to think faster, to anticipate situations, and to act sooner.

Sudden lane changes on a freeway by you or another driver can be dangerous. You should use the proper signal for every lane change. When you want to pass, check for fast approaching vehicles to the rear and **use your turn signals briefly before beginning your lane change.**

If you must stop on a freeway because of mechanical or other emergencies, signal and move your vehicle into the breakdown lane if possible. Beware of vehicles that might be traveling wrongfully in the breakdown lane.
Beware of the condition called **velocitizing**. This happens when you begin to feel that you are going slower than your actual speed. Be particularly aware of **velocitizing** when preparing to leave a freeway. You must reduce speed and return to normal driving conditions as you approach the exit.

On long freeway trips, pull off the road to a safe place occasionally to rest in a designated safe area (not in the breakdown lane). To avoid the effects of **highway hypnosis**, (a condition caused by long periods of driving) get out of your vehicle for a while to relax and to take refreshments.

It is recommended motorist on long trips should stop and rest every 100 miles driven or every 2 hours

If it becomes necessary to make repairs along any highway, be sure to move the vehicle to a place where all four wheels are off the main pavement. Be sure to turn on the vehicle's hazard (emergency) flashing lights. If available, consider using flares, reflectors, or triangles.

Acceleration lanes permit motorists entering freeways the opportunity to accelerate to the speed of traffic.
Deceleration lanes permit motorists about to exit a freeway to slow down to the exit ramp speed.
Merging area is the area beyond the acceleration lane on a freeway where motorists merge into the flow of traffic.
Freeway speeds vary from lane to lane; therefore, it is important for motorists to pick the proper lane to travel. The **far-left lane** is for passing other vehicles. Trucks, buses, and other special vehicles are prohibited from traveling in this lane where posted. The **middle lane(s)** is (are) for through traffic. The **right lane** is for slower moving traffic and for motorists entering and exiting the freeway.



M. Safe Driving on the Highway

The following are recommendations to be a safe highway driver:

1. **Drive at or below posted speed limits.** Rhode Island law sets speed limits as follows: 25 miles per hour (mph) in residential areas and 50-65 mph on most highways.
2. **Don't tailgate.** The easiest way to tell if you are a safe distance from the vehicle ahead of you is the three-second-following-distance rule. If the roadway is wet or slippery, you will need additional distance (seconds). If you are being tailgated, to avoid the risk of aggressive driving or road rage, get out of the aggressive driver's way. Change lanes or allow the driver to pass you. Never speed up because the tailgater may continue to tailgate you at the higher speed. Never slam on your brakes. Don't aggravate an aggressive driver. Stay calm and ignore potential aggressive road rage incidents.
3. **Don't drive at the same speed for a long time.** Change your speed occasionally on long trips.

4. **Look behind you now and then in your rear/side mirrors.** Never pass a vehicle until you are sure no one is coming up behind you in the passing lane.
5. **Always signal before changing lanes.** Do this soon enough to let other drivers know what you are going to do, within 100 feet.
6. **Never stop in the traffic lane**. Stop on a highway only if you must. Move as far off the traffic lane as you can. If you need help, raise the hood of your vehicle, tie a white cloth on the door handle and stay in your locked vehicle.
7. **Drive in the right lane unless otherwise posted or if you are passing another vehicle.** Making frequent lane changes are unsafe. Slow traffic must always keep to the right.
8. **Stop and rest when drowsy.** Driving when drowsy is a major cause of serious motor vehicle collisions.
9. **Slow down and drive with care in bad weather**. Wet, icy, and snow-covered highways can be very dangerous.
10. **If you miss your exit ramp, go on to the next exit.** Never stop and back up to the missed exit.
11. **Keep your eyes moving, looking at other vehicles**. Always be aware of what is going on around you.
12. **At all times, give emergency vehicles the right-of-way**. If an emergency vehicle is approaching, pull over ***to the right***, stop and wait for it to pass. Before re-entering the flow of traffic, activate your turn signal, glance over your shoulder to ensure another emergency vehicle is not coming, then proceed.
13. Always drive 500 feet behind emergency vehicles.
14. **Be especially careful when buses stop**. Passengers may be entering or leaving buses.
15. **Never take the right-of-way for granted**. The law grants right-of-way, but the other driver may not. Yield to the other driver in these cases; it may save a life.
16. **Move Over Law.** If you are driving on an interstate or roadway with multiple lanes of travel in the same direction, you must move over by changing lanes away from the designated vehicle as soon as it is safe to do so. If you are not able to safely move over, you must slow down.

The Basic Speed Law in Rhode Island requires motorists to drive only as fast as the road conditions dictate. Be it snow, rain, sleet, ice, or road construction, motorists must realize the speed limit sign is the maximum speed for ideal conditions and therefore, they must adjust their speed to the conditions. The Basic Speed Law promotes driving at a speed which is safe for pedestrians, road conditions, and other traffic.

N. Cellular Phone Usage – Personal Wireless Communications Devices

Drivers under the age of 18 are prohibited from using a personal wireless communication device commonly call a cell phone while operating a motor vehicle, per R.I.G.L. 31-22-11.8, 31-22-11.9, 31-22-30 and 31-22-31. This includes a prohibition from using a hands-free device or speakerphone. The only time a minor is permitted to use a cell phone is in an emergency. **If you are under 18, *do not* use a cell phone unless you have an emergency. If you have an emergency, pull to a safe location, and call 911.**

Using a personal wireless communication device while driving is a major distraction to the operator of a motor vehicle. If you do use a cellular phone, take the following precautions:

1. Decide if you really *need* to make/receive a call while driving.
2. Have a passenger place the call *or* dial the wireless communication device when stopped.
3. Pull off the road and in a safe location.
4. Try not to allow wireless communications to affect your emotions, as this may affect your driving.
5. Purchase hands free, Bluetooth or speaker type wireless communication devices. **(Hands free is not risk free)**
6. Try to avoid using wireless communication devices, if possible.

TEXTING WHILE DRIVING IS FORBIDDEN IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND!

Evidence suggests that text messaging (or texting) often requires the driver to both look at the wireless communication device and manipulate the keypad with one's hand.

Wireless communication device penalties you need to know:

If you are a minor (less than 18 years of age), you are NOT allowed to use a cellular phone while driving, as stated in Rhode Island General Law § 31-22-11.9.

If you are found to be in violation of the law after a court appearance,

You are subject to the following penalties**:**

- **First Offense = $100.00 fine**
- **Second Offense = $150.00 fine**
- **Third and subsequent offences = $250.00 fine + lose license until 18 years of age.**

TEXTING PENALTIES

No matter the age, you are NOT allowed to use a wireless handset to compose, read or send text message while operating a motor vehicle, as stated by Rhode Island General Law § 31-22-30.

If you are found to be in violation of the law, you are subject to the following penalties:

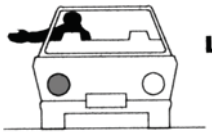
- **First offense = $100 fine**
- **Second offense = $150 fine**
- **Third and subsequent offences = $250 fine**

IV. Signals and Roadway Markings

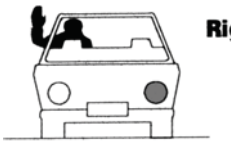
A. Signals

The Rhode Island law states that a driver must make a signal by hand or by using directional lights when driving out of a parking space and at least **100 feet at a minimum** before making a turn.

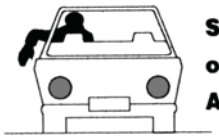
These are the hand signals to use:



Left Turn



Right Turn



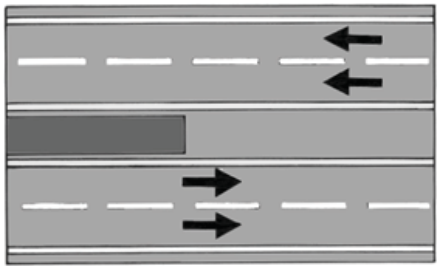
Stopping or Slowing Abruptly

- ***To turn left:*** Put left hand and arm straight out, keeping hand and arm still.
- ***To turn right:*** Put left hand and arm up, keeping hand and arm still.
- ***To stop or slow down:*** Put left hand and arm down, keeping hand and arm still.

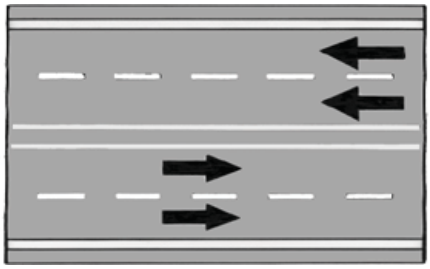
All signals should be given in time to let drivers in back of you know what you are going to do.

B. Roadway Markings

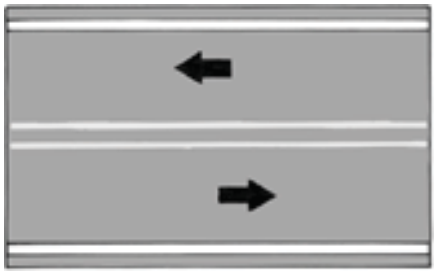
- ***Solid Lines*:** Solid lines separate lanes of traffic. Motorists are not permitted to pass other vehicles nor change lanes. You may cross the solid lines in an emergency (turns, breakdown, object in road, parking, etc).
- ***Broken Lines*:** Broken lines separate lanes of traffic. Motorists are permitted to pass other vehicles (yellow or white) and change lanes (white).
- ***Solid with broken lines*:** A solid line with a broken line is usually painted on two-lane roadways. Motorists with the solid line on their side of the roadway should not pass another vehicle nor cross the solid line. Exceptions exist in emergencies (object in roadway, vehicle in roadway, making a legal left/right hand turn, parking, breakdown). Motorists with the broken line at the drivers' side may pass another vehicle with care.
- ***Yellow Lines*:** Yellow lines separate traffic traveling in opposite directions. Single or double solid yellow lines separate traffic traveling in opposite directions. They prohibit motorists from passing other vehicles. Motorists may not cross the solid lines. Exceptions exist (legal turns, object in road, etc.). Broken yellow lines separate traffic traveling in opposite directions. Passing another vehicle is permitted with care.
- ***White Lines*:** White lines are painted upon the highways to separate traffic moving in the same direction. Solid white lines are usually found to the far right or left (carpool, restricted lane, breakdown, parking) of roadways. Passing another vehicle and changing lanes are restricted. Exceptions exist (carpool lane, slow moving vehicles, hills, breakdown, parking, etc.). Broken white lines allow motorists the opportunity to pass other vehicles and change lanes.
- ***Other roadway markings consist of*:** Crosswalks, Xing, RR, stop lines, parking lanes, reversible lanes, restricted lanes, and shared turn lanes. A **shared turn lane** is the center lane of traffic set apart from the travel lanes by solid single yellow lines on the outside and broken yellow lines inside the shared turn lane. The lane also has arrows painted on the pavement and usually signs indicating restriction for use of the lane for turning only. Motorists wishing to turn shall not enter the lane unless they intend to turn within 100 feet (minimum).
- ***Shared Lane marking, or a "Share the Road" with bicycles and bike lanes*:** A shared-lane marking, installed in the center of a travel lane to indicate that a bicyclist may use the full lane. It is to alert motorists of the lateral location bicyclists are likely to occupy within the traveled way and reduce the incidence of wrong-way bicycling.



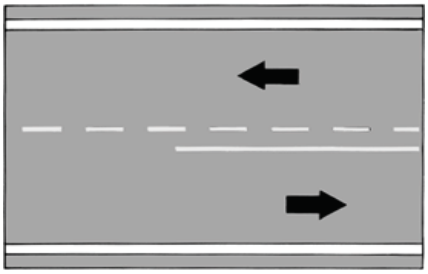
Divided roadway delineated by a median strip, jersey barrier, guard rail, etc.



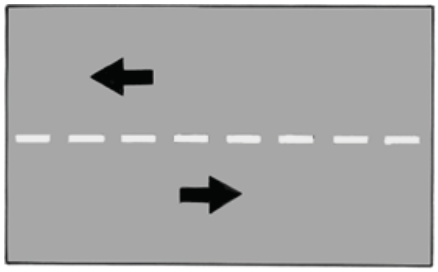
Multi-lane roadway, crossing center or side solid lines permitted to turn or in the event of a breakdown.



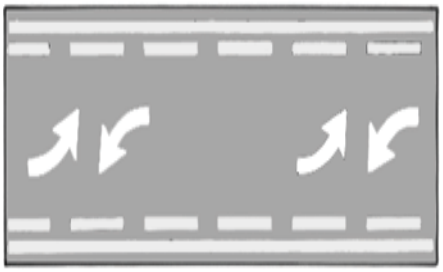
Two-lane, two-way roadway, passing prohibited in both directions, crossing solid lines permitted to turn or in the event of a breakdown.



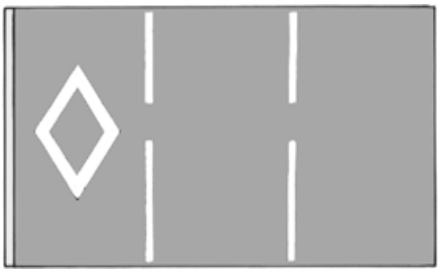
Two-lane, two-way roadway, passing prohibited in one direction.



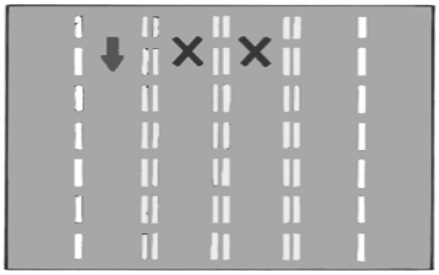
Two-lane, two-way roadway, passing is permitted.



Shared Left Turn Lane: All vehicles use the center lane for left turns in and out of left side streets/driveways.



HOV Lane: High Occupancy Vehicle – Carpooling



Reversible Lanes: Motorist may travel in lane with green arrow.

Disabled Parking with Permit Only.



Pavement Painting



Sign Panel

C. Rotary/Roundabout Diagram



A = Splitter or Refuge

B = Crosswalk

C = Center Island

Roundabouts are intersections that direct traffic in a counterclockwise direction around a center island. The purpose of this circular intersection is to slow traffic while reducing delays in traffic movement. This type of traffic control does not have stop signs or traffic signals; instead, it utilizes yield signs, directional signs, and pavement markings to guide traffic through the intersection.

Prior to entering a roundabout, the motorist should observe the yellow diamond shaped warning sign for an arrow with a circle pattern with two (2) or more arrows pointing away from the circle that represents roundabout exits.

Listed below are the procedures to follow while entering and leaving the traffic circle. **NOTE**: The information in this manual refers to single lane roundabouts. Many states utilize multi-laned roundabouts, so plan ahead.

1. MOTORISTS' DUTIES WHILE NAVIGATING A ROUNDABOUT:

a. Slow down to the posted speed. Yield to pedestrians and other motorists. They have the right-of-way.
b. Ensure you have an adequate safe gap. Move to the proper lane position upon entering, maneuvering, and exiting the roundabout.
c. **ENTER:** Yield to vehicles in the roundabout. Wait for a gap in traffic, and then merge into traffic in the roundabout in a counterclockwise direction.
d. **PROCEED:** Continue through the roundabout until you reach your street. Never stop in a roundabout unless it is an emergency.
e. **EXIT:** Signal, then exit the roundabout to the right. Yield to pedestrians.

2. CYCLISTS' DUTIES WHILE NAVIGATING A ROUNDABOUT:

Generally, cyclists should walk their bicycles across the pedestrian crosswalk. Experienced cyclists may navigate roundabouts like motorists. Bicyclists should ride in the middle of the lane, not near the curb line, to prevent vehicles from passing them. As with following the same laws as motor vehicles, cyclists must yield to pedestrians in crosswalks.

3. PEDESTRIANS' DUTIES WHILE NAVIGATING A ROUNDABOUT:

a. **APPROACH:** Pedestrians should look left upon arriving at a crosswalk in search of oncoming vehicles and bicycles.
b. **CROSS:** Pedestrians should cross to the raised or painted splitter or refuge. Then, look right and finish crossing to the opposite sidewalk.
c. Pedestrians should never walk through a roundabout or cross the center island.

R.I.G.L. 31-17-8, Right-of-Way at Rotary: In the absence of any traffic control device or sign, the driver of a vehicle about to enter a rotary, regardless of the direction from which the vehicle is approaching, shall yield the right-of-way to all vehicles already in the rotary. The State Traffic Commission shall determine the location of yield signs at rotaries. Violations of this section are subject to fines enumerated in 31-41.1-4.

D. Traffic Lights/Signals:

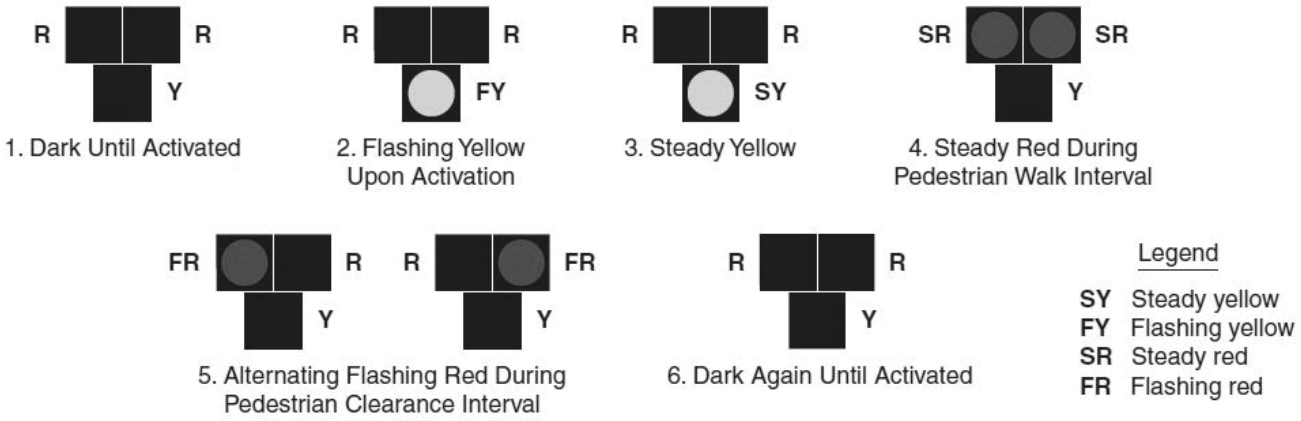
Traffic signals allow vehicles to proceed safely through busy intersections. They give the right-of-way to drivers and pedestrians one street at a time. Beware that **not all** intersections have traffic signals or traffic control signs. Intersections without signs or signals are known as **uncontrolled intersections**. When approaching uncontrolled intersections, motorists must treat the intersection as if there were a yield sign present. Signaled intersections give the right-of-way to drivers and pedestrians one street at a time. When a driver fails to stop at a red light, others who have a green light should not insist on the right-of- way. Motorists should be alert for possible violators of the law and prepare to stop to avoid a collision. **You should slow down, cover the brake, and proceed with caution when approaching all intersections. Covering the brake means taking your foot off the accelerator pedal and hovering it over the brake pedal without touching it, preparing to push the brake pedal if a hazard should arise. Right-of-way is the privilege of having or giving other motorists immediate use of a certain roadway.**

- ***Steady Red Light:*** Stop before reaching the crosswalk and wait until the light is green (unless another light such as a green arrow directs you otherwise).
- ***Right Turn on Red:*** Except when a sign is placed prohibiting a right turn on red, vehicles may turn right on a steady red light after the driver has stopped completely and yielded the right-of-way to pedestrians and other vehicles. **Remember:** A motorist stopped at are red light does not have to turn right on red if they do not desire to do so.
- ***Steady Yellow Light:*** A yellow light tells a driver that a red light is next. Slow down and proceed with caution if a stop cannot be made safely. A motorist must proceed with caution through the yellow light so as to clear the intersection as required by law.
- ***Steady Green Light:*** You may proceed with caution to avoid colliding with another vehicle or pedestrian.
- ***Flashing Yellow Light:*** Slow down, cover the brake, then proceed with caution.
- ***Flashing Red Light:*** When nearing a flashing red traffic light, you must make a full stop and yield the right-of-way to all vehicles on your right and left. Treat the flashing red signal as a stop sign.
- ***Traffic Light with a Green Arrow:*** In cities, intersections often have traffic lights that show a green arrow along with the red light. Vehicles at the light may proceed into the intersection and turn in the direction indicated by the green arrow. This is known as a protected turn lane. A **protected turn lane** will protect motorists as they turn at intersections. They are protected from on-coming traffic, and a special lane with markings designates this lane. The lane will have an arrow signal, which allows safe passage.
- ***Traffic Light with a Red Arrow:*** Red arrows are usually used on left/right-hand turns. When a red arrow is displayed, you must stop and may not proceed in the direction of the arrow. When the red arrow goes out, it will be followed either by a green arrow, a steady green light, or a flashing yellow arrow. If there is a lane marked for turning, you should be in that lane well in advance of approaching the intersection, give your signal and make the turn so as not to interfere with other traffic.
- ***Traffic Light with a Flashing Yellow Arrow:*** Flashing yellow arrows are sometimes used for left-hand turns. When a flashing yellow arrow is displayed, you may proceed with turning in the direction of the arrow only after yielding to oncoming traffic and pedestrians. Oncoming traffic has a steady green light.

- ***Stale green light*** is a light that has been green for a while.
- ***Fresh green light*** is a light that has just turned green.
- ***HAWK*: High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk is used to let pedestrians safely cross a street.**

***HAWK*: HIGH-INTENSTY ACTIVATED CROSSWALK** (check with DOT)

Figure 4F-3. Sequence for a Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon





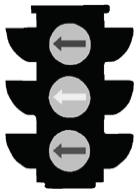
SOLID RED LIGHT
Complete stop. The signal stopped until signal turns green.



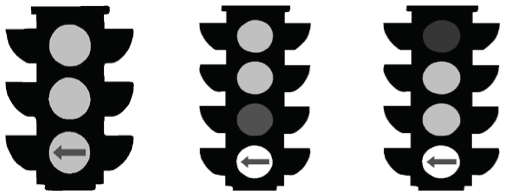
SOLID YELLOW LIGHT
Clear the intersection. Prepare for the red light.



SOLID GREEN LIGHT
Go, if clear, after yielding or stopping for vehicles or pedestrians.



RED, YELLOW and GREEN ARROWS tell. motorist to stop/go in the direction the arrow is pointing.



GREEN ARROWS tell motorists they may proceed in the direction of the arrow (also known as the "Protected Turn Situation").



HORIZONTAL TRAFFIC SIGNAL



FLASHING RED SIGNAL
A flashing red signal is treated as a stop sign.



FLASHING YELLOW SIGNAL
A flashing yellow will tell motorists to proceed with caution.



PEDESTRIAN CROSSING SIGNALS

V. Driving Emergencies

The following section contains suggested methods of handling common driving emergencies. Please keep in mind that every emergency situation varies, and these suggestions may not be applicable to all emergencies.

A. How to Avoid Skidding

Most skids are caused by the driver's failure to react in time to adjust the vehicle's speed to road and traffic conditions. When you are driving on a slippery road, you should apply the brakes by very gently pumping them and maintaining the proper speed for the road conditions (this procedure is for vehicles with conventional brakes only).

On roads that are wet or icy, you should never make any sudden changes in speed or direction. If your vehicle is equipped with anti-lock brakes, do not pump the brake. Any pumping of anti-lock brakes could cancel the feature and cause the vehicles brakes to lock up and skid.

Press the pedal firmly and maintain pressure until the vehicle stops. Know your vehicle and follow the instructions in your owner's manual. **ABS – Anti-lock Braking System** is a computer controlled braking system that keeps the wheels rotating (turning) during emergency braking. Thus, the vehicle will not skid, and steering is always available to the driver. **If the driver stomps on the brake and stays on the brake, they will be able to steer in the direction they want to travel**. The brake **(Pedal)** will pulsate – this is normal for ABS systems.

B. How to Control a Vehicle in a Skid

To control a vehicle as it begins to skid:

1. Let off the gas.
2. Keep your foot away from the brake pedal and the clutch (if applicable).
3. Let the vehicle slow gradually.
4. Look and turn the steering wheel in the direction you want the vehicle to go.
5. Be prepared to steer left and right a few times until you get your vehicle completely under control.

There are no set rules for vehicle control. Different techniques *may* be required depending on whether the vehicle is front wheel drive, rear-wheel drive, or all-wheel drive. Consult your owner's manual for instructions before an emergency arises.

C. Total Brake Failure

If you put your foot on the brake and the pedal goes (directly) right to the floor:

1. Pump the brake pedal even if your vehicle is equipped with an Anti-lock braking system. Pumping might temporarily restore enough brake fluid pressure to slow or stop your vehicle. You will know after three (3) or four (4) pumps if your brakes are going to hold.
2. Downshift to a lower gear. This uses the braking power of the engine to slow your vehicle.
3. Engage the parking brake. You can quickly release the parking brake for a moment if the vehicle begins to skid.
4. Search for an open zone. You can still steer. As a last resort, rub the wheels against a curb to reduce speed. If a collision is unavoidable, steer for a sideswipe rather than colliding head-on into something solid.

D. Blowout or Flat Tire

If you experience tire failure, remember the tire is already a total loss; therefore, your task is to drive to safety:

1. Grip the steering wheel firmly with two (2) hands.
2. Ease up on the accelerator to slow the vehicle. Do not brake. Braking can cause the vehicle to swerve. Let

the vehicle slow gradually.
3. As soon as possible, turn on your hazard warning lights (red triangle on dashboard)
4. Check the traffic situation as you gain control of the vehicle.
5. Change lanes until you reach a safe location off the highway.
6. Drive off the roadway slowly, braking gently.

E. Stuck Accelerator Pedal

If your accelerator pedal sticks to the floor or your engine races out of control:

1. Kick the side of the accelerator once or twice to try to jar it free.
2. Shift the car to NEUTRAL at the same time you apply the brake.
3. Choose an escape path that leads to an open zone off the roadway. Continue braking.
4. If you are steering into a sharp curve or turn, shift to NEUTRAL immediately. Depress the clutch in a stick-shift vehicle. The engine will race, but power is removed from the drive wheels. You might damage the engine or transmission in an automatic transmission, but you may avoid a collision.
5. Follow your escape path off the roadway.
6. Turn off the ignition once you are off the roadway.

F. Engine Failure

If you are driving and the engine suddenly shuts off, sputters or spots, shift to NEUTRAL *(and try to restart the vehicle) when the engine first sputters or stops.*

1. Begin moving out of traffic to the nearest shoulder or curbing.
2. Turn on the hazard flashers. Do not brake.
3. Try to restart the engine while you are moving. If the engine starts, shift to a forward gear and proceed. If it does not start, move onto the shoulder or to the curb, if possible. Steering will be harder when power is lost by engine failure. Try to start the engine.
4. If the engine still fails to start, pull to the side of the road, and stop the vehicle. Raise the hood and leave the hazard flashers on. If you have a wireless communication device (cellular phone), use it to secure assistance.
5. Go for assistance.

G. Off Road Recovery

If you are involved in a situation where driving off the road is your only option of avoiding a collision, or you have driven off the shoulder, follow the steps listed below to return to the roadway:

1. Hold the steering wheel firmly (on the top) half with both hands. The greater the drop-off between roadway and shoulder, the greater amount of steering control you need. Keep your vehicle heading straight toward your target.
2. Ease up on the accelerator and all the vehicle to slow down gradually. Avoid braking, if possible.
3. Position your vehicle so it straddles the roadway edge.
4. Select a place to return to the roadway, where the shoulder is nearest the level of the roadway.
5. Check for traffic. Signal, check your blind spot, and return to the roadway.
6. Steer sharply toward the roadway to return. If the drop-off is severe, you might need to slow more and turn very sharply to get back onto the pavement.
7. Counter-steer sharply the instant the front tires touch the roadway. You counter-steer when you steer in the opposite direction.
8. Center the vehicle in the lane closest to where you left the roadway and re-establish your target. Cancel your signal. Accelerate to match the flow of traffic.

H. Threat of a Head-on Collision

Head-on collisions may result in injury that is more serious to drivers and passengers than any other type of crash. Head-on collisions are also more likely to result in death than any other type of crash. The following steps can be taken to avoid a head-on collision:

1. **Maintain vehicle control**. Brake hard, but do not lock the wheels. Slowing lessens the force of the impact, gives the other driver space and time to recover control.
2. **Sound the horn and flash the headlights**. These actions might alert an impaired (distracted) driver.

Continue braking and move to the right if the driver does not heed your warning.
3. **Steer right toward the shoulder or curb-line.**
4. **Do not steer left.** The other driver likely will try to steer back into the proper lane. Prepare to drive entirely off the roadway to the right, if necessary.

I. Threat of a Side-Impact Collision

Take these actions if you are threatened with a side-impact collision:

1. Brake or accelerate quickly. Do whichever seems more likely to reduce the impact of the collision.
2. Sound the horn to alert the other driver.
3. Change lanes or swerve away from the impact. Be aware of the constantly changing traffic situation around you.

J. Threat of a Rear-End Collision

Take these actions if you are threatened with a rear-end collision:

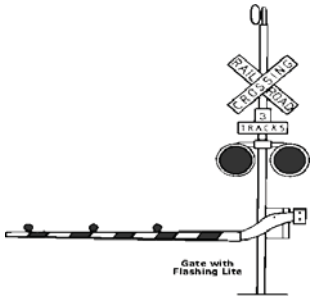
1. Flash your brake lights early to alert the driver behind you.
2. As the vehicle nears, check your front zones for open space and move forward, if possible. This precaution gives the driver approaching from the rear more time and space to stop safely.
3. If the intersection is clear, accelerate to give the other driver more space to stop. If your path is not clear, turn right.
4. If a collision is unavoidable, release your brakes just before the collision occurs. This helps soften the impact. Brake immediately after the collision to avoid sliding into another traffic lane.

K. Headlight Failure

If your headlights suddenly go out:

1. Turn on your parking lights, fog lights, hazard (emergency) flashers, or turn signal.
2. Try the headlight switch a few times.
3. If your vehicle is equipped with fog lights, try them.
4. Try the high beam switch. It may be on a separate circuit.
5. Pull off the road as quickly as possible and leave your emergency flashers on.

L. Vehicle Stalls on Railroad Tracks





If your vehicle stalls on railroad tracks and you know a train is approaching:

1. Get yourself and any passengers out of your vehicle and off the tracks and move as far from the tracks as possible.
2. To avoid being hit by debris from the collision, exit your vehicle and run, far away from the tracks, in a parallel line in the opposite direction from which the train is moving. The debris field from the collision of train and motor vehicle will travel in the same direction that the train is moving – you want to be as far away as possible in the **opposite** direction.

Railroad crossing information for the motorist:

- Be alert to signs and roadway markings indicating a railroad crossing is ahead (RR), circular yellow sign.
- When red signals begin to flash or gates are being lowered, stop, look, and listen.
- Never attempt to beat the train to the crossing or go around gates that are down.
- All buses, trucks transporting hazardous material, and certain other vehicles must *always* stop prior to crossing railroad tracks. Be patient and wait for these vehicles to cross.
- Although some railroad tracks appear abandoned, never assume a train cannot be present. Assume a train will travel on the tracks, even if the tracks appear to be abandoned.
- Drivers and passengers in vehicles are at significant risk of serious injury or death when colliding with a train.
- It may take a train a mile and a half to come to a complete stop after applying the brake.

M. Vehicle Catches Fire

Whenever you see smoke coming from under the hood of your vehicle:

1. Pull immediately off the road, turn your ignition to the off position, and move away from the vehicle.
2. Dial 911 for police and fire personnel.
3. If the fire is under the hood and flames are shooting, **DO NOT** open the hood of the vehicle.
4. If the fire is out of control move at least 100 feet away, as a fuel fire can cause the fuel tank to explode. Do not attempt to put out the fire.

N. Vehicle in Water

Should your vehicle drive into water or become stalled in a rain-swelled roadway:

1. Immediately remove your seat belt.
2. Open a window. If your vehicle is equipped with power windows, open the window before the water damages the electrical system.
3. Assist children out of the rear seat belts and child restraints, asking older children to assist the younger ones. Move the passengers to the front seat as calmly as possible.
4. Exit the vehicle and move to the roof. This will keep you as dry as possible and even in moving water, you can ride the vehicle like a boat for a short time. Once on the roof, call 911 and locate the nearest dry land.
5. Avoid opening your door as water will fill the inside of your vehicle and could cause your vehicle to flip onto the roof.
6. Should your vehicle sink before you are able to get out, climb into the rear seat. The weight of the engine will cause the vehicle to sink nose first; therefore, a pocket of air may remain in the rear of your vehicle. As the vehicle settles, take a deep breath, and climb out of the window.
7. NEVER RE-ENTER the vehicle to gather possessions.

O. Driving in Inclement Weather

Winter Driving

Drivers may not be prepared for driving on ice or snow and should take it slow. Remember to drive well below the posted speed limit and increase your following distance between other vehicles leaving plenty of room between vehicles.
Black ice, also known as invisible ice, can be extremely dangerous. Roads that seem dry may be slippery and dangerous. Reduce your speed when approaching intersections, off-ramps, bridges, or shady areas – all are increased areas for black ice.

Brake – Brake early, brake slowly, brake correctly, and never slam on the brakes. If you have anti-lock brakes, press the pedal down firmly and hold it. **If you don't have anti-lock brakes, gently pump the pedal. Either way,** give yourself plenty of space and distance to stop your vehicle safely.

DRIVING TIP THAT COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE!

NEVER DRIVE IN THE RAIN OR SNOW WITH YOUR CRUISE CONTROL ON.

If the cruise control is on when your car begins to hydroplane and your tires lose contact with the pavement, your car will accelerate to a higher rate of speed making you lose control.

P. Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Carbon monoxide poisoning can occur anytime but especially during cold weather when motorists have all their windows closed. Carbon monoxide can be found in the exhaust fumes of most motor vehicles. If you begin to yawn or feel dizzy or nauseous, you may be experiencing the symptoms of the poisoning. A leaking muffler can allow escaping carbon monoxide to enter the interior of the vehicle. The fumes are odorless, and the only cure is to open your windows and allow fresh air to circulate within your vehicle. Having your exhaust system checked periodically as well as not idling your vehicle with the windows closed for a long period of time may avoid the effects of CM poisoning. Carbon Monoxide poisoning may cause death if untreated.

VI. Motorcycles

What all drivers should know about motorcycles:

1. Motorcyclists often reduce speed by downshifting or merely rolling off the throttle, thus not activating the brake light. Allow for more following distance, four (4) seconds. At intersections, predict a cyclist may reduce speed without visual warning.
2. Motorcyclists often adjust position within a lane to be seen more easily and to minimize the effects of wind, road debris, and passing vehicles. Motorcyclists may adjust lane positions for a safety purpose. If a motorcycle is in the left or right portion of the lane, they may be selecting a safer lane position, usually giving them a better line of sight.
3. Because motorcycles are less visible, they may appear to be moving faster than they really are.
4. Because of its small size, a motorcycle may look farther away than it is. When checking traffic to turn at an intersection, predict a motorcycle is closer than it looks.
5. Because of its small size, a motorcycle can be easily hidden by objects inside or outside a car (door posts, mirrors, passengers, bushes, fences, bridges, blind spots, etc.). Take an extra moment to thoroughly check traffic, whether you are changing lanes or turning at intersections.
6. The stopping distance for motorcycles is nearly the same as for cars, but slippery pavement make it difficult to stop quickly. Allow for more following distance behind a motorcycle because it cannot always stop abruptly.
7. Mirrors are smaller on a motorcycle and usually convex. This gives the cyclist a smaller image of you and makes you appear farther back than you actually are. Keep at least four (4) second space cushion when following a motorcyclist.
8. Maneuverability is one of a motorcycle's better characteristics, but only at slower speeds and with good road conditions. A motorcyclist may not be able to safely maneuver out of the way.
9. Carrying a passenger complicates a motorcyclist's task. Balance is more difficult, stopping distance is increased, and maneuverability is reduced. Predict more risks when you see two people on a motorcycle, especially near intersections.
10. There is a great deal more vehicles and larger trucks than there are motorcycles on the road, and some drivers may not 'see' a motorcycle. Look twice for motorcycles, especially when checking traffic at an intersection.
11. At night, single headlights and taillights on motorcycles can blend into the lights of other traffic. Those 'odd' lights could be a motorcycle.
12. Look twice to save a life before making lane changes or turning at intersections.
13. Leather is the most protection a rider can wear. Most leather products come in black which is the least visible color and tends to blend into the background at night. Some "motorcycle specific" clothing come with retro reflective stitching, so adhere caution at night if you think you see a glimpse of reflection or bright color in your head lights.
14. Be prepared for a motorcyclist to swerve around a pothole or low set manhole cover.
15. While preparing to stop, flash your brake lights a couple times at night to warn those behind you that your about to stop. While it is a good habit to practice for your own safety, remember that motorcyclists only have one head light and may not illuminate the roadway.
16. Before attempting to pass or change lanes, perform a visual head check, to the left and right, since every mirror has a blind spot, and some motorcyclists may travel in small groups.
17. Older model motorcycles do not have self-cancelling turn signals so use caution when attempting to pass them. Please take an extra couple of seconds to make sure they see you.
18. In recent years, there has been an increased use of bicycles, scooters, and three wheelers on our roadways. Please use caution.



Use of Protective Equipment:

Cyclists can reduce or prevent injuries by using proper equipment and following the laws and regulations associated with motorcycles:

1. A helmet properly worn can reduce or prevent head injuries. Rhode Island law requires passengers on motorcycles to wear helmets. In addition, any operator under twenty-one (21) shall always wear a certified helmet. New operators, regardless of age, must wear an approved helmet for the first year of their license.
2. Eye protection in the form of glasses, goggles or a face shield can reduce or prevent eye injuries. Rhode Island

law requires all operators to properly wear eye protection.
3. Heavy shoes or boots can reduce or prevent injury to an operator's feet.
4. Full length pants, not shorts, and a jacket made of durable material can reduce or prevent bodily injury.
5. Full-fingered gloves can reduce or prevent injury to the operator's hands.

VII. Systems for Safe, Courteous, and Defensive Driving

Defensive driving is the art of protecting yourself and others from dangerous and unexpected changes in the driving environment. The defensive driver anticipates actions of other roadway users and is ready to adjust speed and position accordingly. The defensive driver also adjusts to changes in weather and road conditions. The driver can learn to develop driving habits and skills by following the additional systems described below:

1. **IPDE:** The IPDE system is a 'thinking-doing' process. IPDE can help you to avoid collisions. With practice, this process will become automatic. IPDE will also help you become a defensive driver.

Identify:	Locate any hazards in the driving scene by getting the big picture.	**THINK!**
Predict:	Judge where possible points of conflict may occur.	**THINK!**
Decide:	Determine the actions to take and when and where to take them.	**THINK!**
Execute:	Act by maneuvering the vehicle to avoid any conflict.	**DO!**

2. **ZONES:** The zone system consists of six (6) zones (areas of space) around your vehicle, that is the width of a lane extending as far as the driver can see. Being aware of open zones and closed zones around your vehicle can help you avoid collisions and become a defensive driver.
   - ***Open zone:*** A area you can drive without restrictions to your line of sight or intended path of travel.
   - ***Closed zone:*** A area that is not because of restrictions in your line of sight or intended path of travel.

3. **ORDERLY VISUAL SEARCH PATTERN:** The orderly visual search pattern will help you develop your own process for identifying trouble while driving. It is a process of searching critical areas in a regular sequence for clues or conflicts in and around your intended path of travel.
   - Check your line of sight and path of travel ahead.
   - Evaluate your front zones in the 12-15 second target area (this refers to the area you will be in after you have traveled for 12-15 seconds) by searching intersections, driveways, and parked vehicles for possible changes in your line of sight and path of travel.
   - Glance in your mirrors to check your rear zones.
   - Evaluate your 4-6 second range for any changes to your path of travel.
   - Look ahead again to another 12-15 second range.
   - Evaluate your 4-6 second range for any changes to your path of travel.
   - Glance in your mirrors.
   - Glance at your speedometer and gauges.
   - Continue the sequence again as you drive.

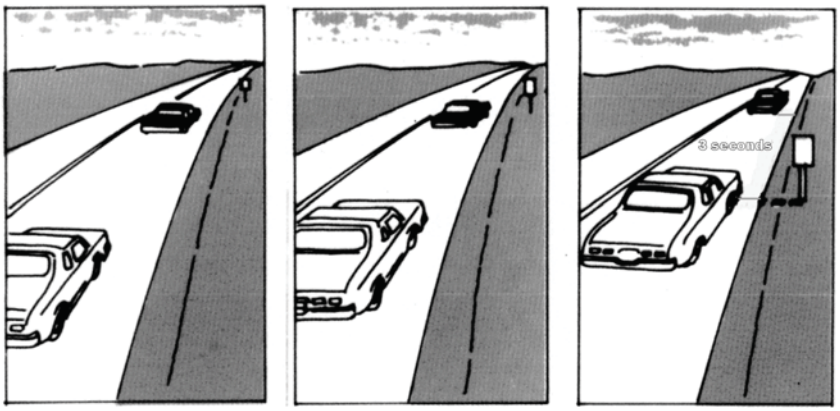
4. **MR. SMITH:** Mr. Smith is Harold L. Smith, who developed this system in 1952 based on a "space-cushion" principle, which manipulates space to provide a cushion between your vehicle and everything else on the road. It is an internationally recognized safety system. The Smith System has five (5) keys to collision free driving.

a. ***Leave Yourself an Out:*** Situations may occur that you don't plan on. Keep plenty of space between you and the next vehicle.
b. ***Aim High In Steering:*** Don't look down at your fender or hood but ahead 4 to 6 seconds (the space you will travel in 4-6 seconds) and 12 to 15 seconds ahead at the middle of your driving lane.
c. ***Get The Overall Picture:*** Look ahead a full block in cities/towns and half a mile ahead on highways. You want to see everything in the space you are moving into, along with the vehicles you see ahead of you.
d. ***Keep Your Eyes Moving:*** Don't look at one thing. Develop the art of scanning and glancing, continually and quickly. Look ahead, look at the side, and look in your rear and side mirrors.
e. ***Make Sure They See You:*** See and be seen by other roadway users. Don't take for granted that others can see your vehicle. Tap your horn or flick your headlights if you need to.

A. The Three (3) Second Rule – Following Distance

The following three-second rule cannot always guarantee you time to stop to avoid a collision, but it works in most situations.

How to calculate your following distance: Here's how it works: You are following another vehicle and that vehicles rear bumper passes a fixed point (traffic sign, overpass, pole, tree, a line on the pavement, etc.) you start counting seconds, 'one-thousand and one, two-thousand and two, three- thousand and three'. If your vehicle's front bumper passes the point before you finish counting to three, you are following too close to the vehicle in front of you. Reduce your speed, and count to three again. When driving under adverse weather/road conditions, be sure to increase your following distance an additional second for EACH imperfect condition.



B. Point of no Return

The distance that a driver needs in order to safely bring a vehicle to a complete stop. The point of no return is described as the distance needed to bring your vehicle to a complete stop so as not to enter the intersection, taking into consideration your speed and condition of the roadway. It is at that point braking must take place to ensure you do not enter the intersection or crash into another vehicle or fixed object.

C. Lane Positions

You have three (3) different lane positions within a single lane of travel by which you can position your vehicle.

1. **Lane position 1**: Vehicle in the middle of the lane. This is the safest position to drive under normal driving situations when no potential hazards exist to the left and right of the roadway.
2. **Lane position 2: Vehicle position** three (3) to six (6) inches from the left line of the lane. This is the position to drive if hazards exist to the right of the vehicle or you intend to turn left.
3. **Lane position 3:** Vehicle positions three (3) to six (6) inches from the right line or curb of the lane. This is the position to drive if hazards exist to the left of your vehicle or you intend to turn right.

VIII. Sharing the Road Safely

A. Sharing The Road With Large Trucks

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) warns that big trucks are four (4) times more likely than vehicles to get into collisions. Trucks are less maneuverable than vehicles and come with far bigger blind spots. The following are three major blind spots for truck drivers:

1. The front of the truck.
2. The left and right front sides.
3. Behind the truck (if the truck is pulling a trailer, the blind spot is over 50 feet long).

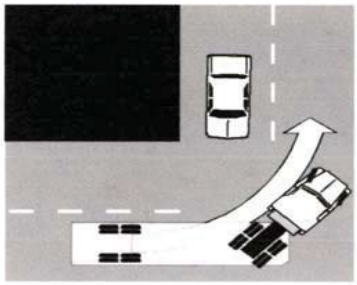
It is up to you to avoid the blind spots, also known as 'no zones'. Be sure not to cruise into a truck's right side. If you find yourself in that position, pull ahead or fall back quickly. As you do, grip the steering wheel firmly, especially if narrow lanes force you to drive close to the truck. The airflow between the two vehicles may tend to draw them together unless you are on guard.

It is just as important never to tailgate. Tailgating can be fatal, especially if the vehicle ahead is a semi-tractor-trailer. Stay at least 50 feet back if you expect the driver to see you. You know you have enough distance behind a truck or semi-tractor-trailer when you can see the side-view mirrors of the truck you are following. Always be aware of your position on the roadway as a semi-trailer in driving in urban areas make wide turns. Be alert for the lights and markings on all large vehicles.

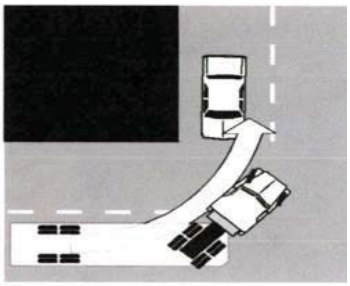
Larger vehicles need more space to make a turn.

Show courtesy to the larger vehicle by giving the larger vehicle more space, which will help the operator see you.

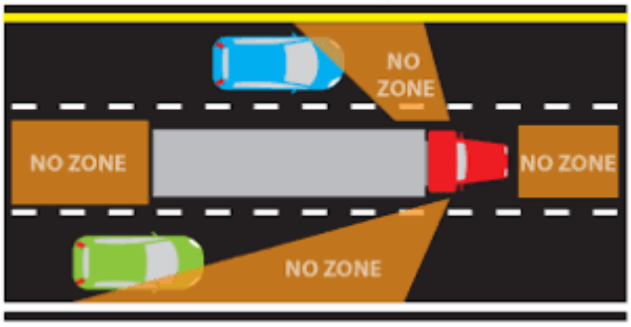
If you cannot see the operator of the larger vehicle in their side-view mirror, then that operator cannot see you.



Right



Wrong



B. Night Driving

Using your headlights

It is more dangerous to drive at night than in the daytime because you cannot see as far ahead at night. The law requires motorists to turn their headlights on when driving from sunset to sunrise, any time you cannot see 500 feet ahead of you, and when windshield wipers are in use as a result of rain, sleet, snow, etc.
When inclement weather has reduced visibility during the daytime, you must turn on your headlights. The law requires that you use your low beam headlights during inclement weather conditions such as snow, rain, and fog or whenever there are conditions that reduce visibility. In these situations, high beams may reflect off the snow, rain, or fog in the air and shorten the distance you can see.
The rear license plate on your vehicle must be lit so it can be seen and read at least 60 feet from the back of the vehicle.

Dimming your headlights: 500/200 Rule of Dimming Headlights

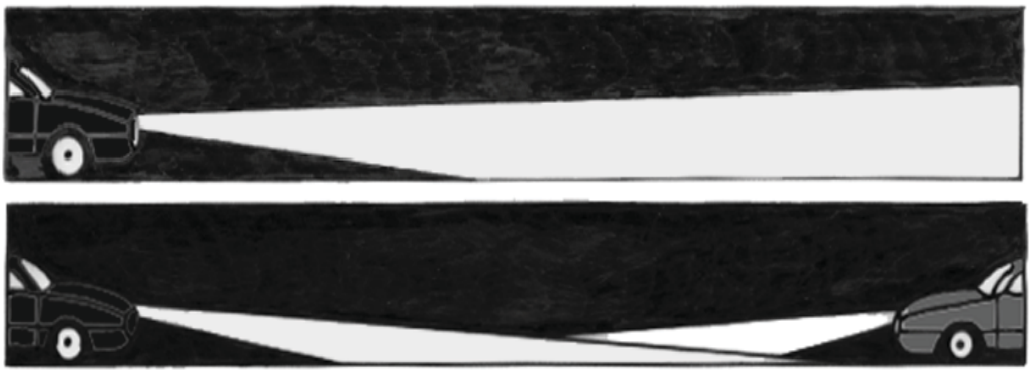
When driving a motor vehicle on the open highway at night, you should dim your high beam headlights when meeting or following another vehicle. Dim your high beam headlights promptly at a distance of at least 500 feet ahead when approaching another vehicle. When following another vehicle at a distance of 200 feet or less, dim your high beam headlights so that they will not distract or blind the driver ahead.

Approaching headlights

To avoid being temporarily blinded by approaching headlights, glance at the right edge of the roadway (or fog line: the white line on the right side of most roadways) until the bright lights have gone by and your vision has returned to normal. Motorists who stare into oncoming vehicles headlights or rear-view mirror light will experience temporary blindness as their body regains sight from the glare. This temporary blindness time is known as glare recovery time. Motorists tend to experience the same effects from bright sunlight as well. The practice of looking to the side of the roadway helps with glare and allows you to detect pedestrians who may be walking close to the edge of the road.

High Beams

Low Beams



C. Pedestrians

Drivers must watch carefully for pedestrians. Many collisions are the result of pedestrians not paying attention or entering traffic carelessly. Drivers who fail to yield the right-of-way or do not use caution when pedestrians are present cause many collisions. Consider the following suggestions for pedestrian safety:

- Drive slowly and remain alert in any areas where there are pedestrians present.
- Watch out for pedestrians who are walking against a red light, stepping into traffic from between parked vehicles, and crossing in locations where there is not a marked crosswalk. Even in situations where pedestrians cross the street carelessly, the driver must always yield.
- Use caution when children are playing in or near the street. Children often move quickly and may not check for traffic.
- Use caution in the presence of elderly pedestrians. They may not be alert to the dangers of traffic situations. They may move at a slower pace, and their reaction time may be reduced in traffic situations.
- Do not stop to pick up hitchhikers at any time.

Pedestrians must also realize the dangers of walking in traffic and should be aware of the following safety rules and suggestions:

- Always follow 'Walk' and 'Don't Walk' signals.
- If facing a yellow or red light, cross only if a 'Walk' signal is showing.
- When there are sidewalks, pedestrians should not walk on or along the highway. If there are no sidewalks, pedestrians should walk on the left side of the road facing traffic.
- Use crosswalks. The main purpose of crosswalks is to encourage pedestrians to cross only at certain locations where crossings can be made safely. **Any intersection of public roads constitutes a legal crosswalk whether it is marked or not.**

When walking at dusk or at night, pedestrians should wear light colored or reflective clothing.

When you see a potential hazard ahead such as children playing in the street, a vehicle parked close

to the highway, etc., reduce speed right away. Do not wait until you come upon the hazard before acting. Stop if necessary.

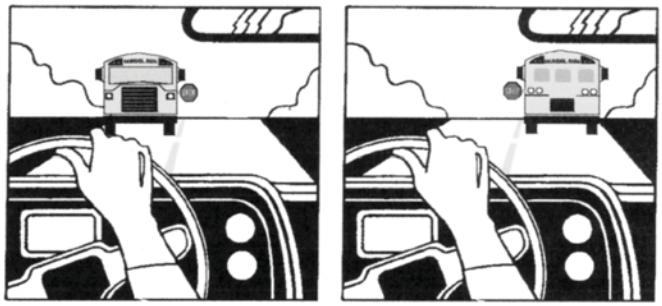
D. Pedestrians with a Visual Impairment

Use extra caution when approaching a pedestrian with a visual impairment. Pedestrians who are visually impaired may use a white cane or a guide dog to assist them traveling along or across a street. Fines for failing to yield to pedestrians with a visual impairment may result in a fine up to $1,000.

When a pedestrian is using a white cane or a guide dog while crossing or attempting to cross the street ahead of you, you must bring your vehicle to a complete stop before arriving at the intersection and yield the right-of-way to the pedestrian.

Pedestrians who are visually impaired use the sound of traffic (including your engine) as a guide in determining when it is safe to cross a street, so never assume they will expect you to make a right turn on a red light at an intersection after stopping. Always be alert for pedestrians who are visually impaired, particularly if you are driving an electric or hybrid vehicle that is quieter than most other vehicles on the road.

E. School Buses



If red lights are flashing on the school bus, Rhode Island requires that motorists approaching from either direction come to a full stop and remain stopped until the bus's red lights no longer flash. This requirement applies not only on public highways but also on private roads and in parking lots. A fine between $250 to $500 and/or suspension of your driver's license for a period up to thirty (30) days will be imposed for the first violation of this law. Penalties increase for subsequent violations. Motorists do not have to stop for the flashing red lights of the school bus when the bus is opposite your vehicle on a divided highway. A divided highway is any roadway with a Jersey barrier, guardrail, grass or cement median, trees, water, etc. between the lanes of travel in opposite directions.

F. Bicycle Riders

Bicycle riders are given the same rights and must follow the same laws as drivers of motor vehicles. In addition, they should follow these rules:

- Bicycle riders should ride as close to the right of the road as they can do safely. They should only cross the lane of vehicle travel to make a left turn.
- No more than two (2) bicycles may be ridden side by side.
- When there is a safe bicycle path near the roadway, riders should use the path rather than the road.
- Any person fifteen (15) years of age or younger riding a bicycle or a passenger on a bicycle on a public highway, bicycle path, or other public right-of-way must wear a certified bicycle helmet.
- Bicyclists have a legal right to ride on the roadway. Under Rhode Island Law, a bicycle is considered a vehicle with equal rights and responsibilities as other vehicles on the road. Bicyclists are transportation users, as well as motorists. They are more vulnerable to injury than those in a vehicle, so motorists must drive carefully when bicyclists are present.

Motor vehicle drivers must be alert and cautious for bicycle riders in or near the roadway.

Share the Road with Bicyclists

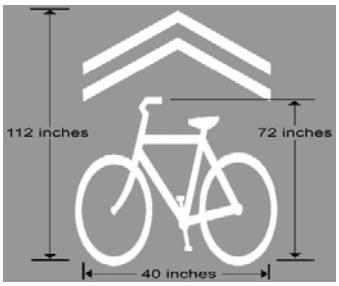
Rhode Island General Law (RIGL § 31-19-6 "Bicycles to right of road") **–** *Every person operating a bicycle upon a roadway shall ride as near to the right side of the roadway as practicable, exercising due care when passing a standard vehicle or one proceeding in the same direction except where official traffic control devises (signs or pavement markings) specifically direct bicyclists to do otherwise.*

Road hazards not easily seen by automobile drivers or trucks may hamper a bicyclist or cause them to crash. These hazards could include potholes, glass, litter, storm grates, and railroad crossings, as well as opened doors of parked vehicles. Any of these items could cause a bicyclist to move into your path or to slow down. Give

bicyclists plenty of clearance on the street so they will have room to move around these hazards.

Bicyclists should travel in the same direction as the rest of the traffic. Automobiles must yield to bicyclists in the same way as for other types of vehicles. Look for signs that a bicyclist is inexperienced such as whether the bicyclist is riding in a smooth and straight manner or weaving, wobbling, and riding against traffic without a helmet. Give such bicyclists plenty of room.

Shared Lane Markings





Have you seen this road marking? Well, be aware. They have been installed on some local and state roadways over the past few years. The road marking in the picture is a "shared lane" marking. What does the road marking mean? What purpose does it serve? The points below explain the purpose of the Shared Lane markings:

- Assist bicyclist with lateral positioning in a shared lane with on-street parallel parking in order to reduce the chance of a bicyclist impacting the door of a parked vehicle.
- Assist bicyclists with lateral positioning in lanes that are too narrow for a motor vehicle and a bicycle to travel side by side within the same traffic lane.
- Alert road users of the lateral location bicyclists are likely to occupy within a traveled way.
- Encourage safe passing of bicyclists by motorists.
- Reduce the incidence of wrong-way bicycling.

Seven Things to Know When Sharing the Road with Bicyclists:

1. When passing cyclists leave adequate space and be aware of road surface conditions like potholes, puddles or debris which may force cyclists to move further left than usual.

    - Don't sound your horn as you approach a cyclist as the loud noise can startle them and cause them to swerve.
    - Avoid talking on a wireless communication device (cell phone), text messaging, or being otherwise distracted when approaching or passing a bicyclist.
    - Avoid driving or swerving into bicycle lanes.

2. When approaching or passing a bicycle be prepared to stop suddenly if a person enters the driver's lane.

    - In inclement weather, give bicyclists extra trailing and passing room like you would give other motorists.
    - Allow as much clearance as possible (3-5 feet) when passing to prevent contact with a bicyclist and be prepared to stop suddenly if the person were to fall into the driver's lane.

3. When a road is too narrow for vehicles and bicycles to travel safely side by side, be prepared to reduce speed or stop when the bicyclists ahead of you "takes the travel lane," (i.e., proceeds in the center of the road).
4. Do not pass bicyclists if oncoming traffic is near. Wait until there are no oncoming vehicles before you pass.

    - After you have passed a bicyclist, do not reduce speed, or stop abruptly in front of them.

5. When turning left at an intersection, yield to oncoming bicyclists just as you would to an on-coming vehicles.
6. Before turning right at an intersection or driveway, check for bicyclists on your right or behind you who are continuing straight ahead.
7. Look behind you for a bicyclist approaching your parked vehicle before you open the door into a traffic lane.

Driving on Roads with Bicycle Lanes

In Rhode Island, bicycle lanes on the road are clearly marked with a solid white line, with the words "Bicycle Lane" and include bicycle symbols. Do not drive in a bicycle lane. You may cross a bicycle lane when you are turning a

corner or entering or leaving an alley, private road, or driveway. Yield to bicyclists in a bicycle lane or on a sidewalk before you turn into the lane or sidewalk.

Watching for Children on Bicycles

Children's visual skills and depth perception may not be as developed as well as adults and they may not be able to judge the speed and distance of oncoming vehicles. The unpredictable behavior of young children can pose an increase safety risk for motorists.

Always reduce speed and use extra caution when children are in the vicinity, especially in school zones.

Dooring

Dooring is when the driver or passenger carelessly opens the door of a parked or stopped vehicle and collides with a passing cyclist. Every passenger of a stopped or parked vehicle should check their surroundings before opening the door of a vehicle. Operators of motor vehicles should practice 'Dutch Reach'. This is the practice of opening the driver's door with the right hand, turning your head, and looking out the side and rear windows.

According to Rhode Island General Laws § 31-21-1, "Opening vehicle doors": No person shall open the door of a motor vehicle on the roadways, streets, or highways of this state, available to moving traffic, unless and until it is reasonably safe to do so and can be done without interfering with the movement of other traffic, including pedestrians and bicycles on sidewalks, shoulders, or bicycle lanes. No person shall leave a door open on the side of a vehicle available to moving traffic, including pedestrians and bicycles on sidewalks, shoulders, or bicycle lanes, for a period of time longer than necessary to load or unload passengers. Any person violating the provisions of this section shall be fined as provided in § 31-41.1-4.

Additional bicycling information to know:

Rhode Island's Department of Transportation (RIDOT) "Bike RI" website:
http://www.dot.ri.gov/community/bikeri/index.php#navigation

Rhode Island General Laws (RIGL) § 31-19 "Operation of Bicycles":
http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE31/31-19/INDEX.HTM

Rhode Island General Laws (RIGL) § 31-1-3 "Types of Vehicles":
http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE31/31-1/31-1-3.HTM

Rhode Island General Laws (RIGL) § 31-15 "Passing, Use of Lanes, and Rules of the Road":
http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE31/31-15/31-15-18.HTM

G. Aggressive Driving

In its broadest sense, aggressive driving can refer to any incident in which an angry or impatient motorist or passenger intentionally injures or hits or attempts to injure or hurt another motorist, passenger, or pedestrian, in response to a traffic dispute or grievance. Incidences of aggressive driving cases have increased each year in the United States. As the driver of a motor vehicle, keep calm in traffic, be patient and courteous to other drivers, and avoid unsafe driving habits that can endanger or anger other motorists. Be aware of behaviors that have resulted in violence in the past:

1. Blocking the passing lane (not yielding to someone wishing to pass).
2. Tailgating (riding too close to the vehicle in front of you).
3. Making angry or obscene gestures.
4. Sounding your horn repeatedly.
5. Taking more than one parking space or bumping into another vehicle while parking.
6. Using high beam headlights in heavy traffic areas.
7. Blocking traffic to speak to a passerby or people in another vehicle.
8. Cutting off another vehicle so that it cannot merge, pass, exit, or make a turn.
9. Assuming that an apparently aggressive act was deliberate.

To avoid becoming an aggressive driver:

1. Take breaks on long drives.
2. Focus on your driving and not on the problems of your day.
3. Be comfortable and relaxed when you drive.
4. Avoid all alcohol use before driving.
5. Avoid eye contact with a hostile or angry driver.
6. Do not drive when you are angry, upset, or overtired.

To avoid becoming a victim of aggressive driving:

1. Do not react to any form of aggressive driving.
2. Avoid speeding up, braking, or swerving suddenly, or making eye contact with other drivers.
3. If a driver continues to hassle or follow you, drive to the nearest police station or busy place to get help.
4. Lock your doors whenever you enter or leave your vehicle.
5. When stopped in traffic, leave enough room to pull out from behind the vehicle you are following.
6. If someone tries to get into your automobile, sound your horn or auto alarm.
7. Avoid a fight at all costs.
8. Do not carry any sort of weapon.

If an aggressive driver challenges you, take a deep breath and get out of the aggressive driver's way, even if you THINK you are right. You don't want to be dead right. Save your energy and your life for something worthwhile.

IX. Laws You Must Know

It is your responsibility as a driver in Rhode Island to know all motor vehicle laws. Some of the most important ones are listed below:

1. Drivers of motor vehicles in Rhode Island are permitted, but not required, to turn right at a red light after a full stop unless there is a "no turn on red" sign posted. Drivers must first yield to all oncoming traffic and pedestrians before making their turn.
2. Children who are less than eight (8) years old must be transported in a federally approved restraint seat in the back seat of the vehicle. Follow instructions for use described in the restraint seat manual for age and weight.
3. Seat belt use by the driver and passengers is required.
4. Be alerted to stops for school buses with flashing red lights.
5. You must begin to use your directional signals a minimum distance of at least 100 feet before making turns or changing lanes. Slow down gradually before turning to avoid being hit from the rear.
6. In the absence of signs or signals, when two (2) vehicles approach or enter an intersection from different highways or streets at approximately the same time, the driver of the vehicle on the left must yield the right-of-way to the vehicle on the right.
7. You must turn on vehicle headlights when driving any time from sunset to sunrise and any time you cannot see 500 feet ahead of you. Headlights must be turned on if it is raining or snowing (inclement weather) or in conditions which would reduce visibility to less than 500 feet. Headlights must be on anytime windshield wipers are on.
8. Rhode Island law makes the motorist responsible for removing from the vehicle snow and ice that limit vision and for clearing away from the roof of the vehicle any snow that might blow down on the windshield or windows of other vehicles.
9. All persons driving on the state's public roads must carry motor vehicle liability insurance. When you obtain or renew your vehicle registration, you must sign a statement that you have liability insurance on your vehicle and will keep this insurance for the full registration period. Proof of insurance ($500 fine for failure to comply) must be carried in your vehicle along with the registration at all times. You must also certify upon obtaining or renewing your driver's license that you understand that you must carry proof of insurance when you drive a motor vehicle in the State of Rhode Island.
10. **Littering:** It is a violation of Rhode Island law to litter on public or private roadways or property ($85 to $1000 dollar fine).
11. You are required by Rhode Island law to reduce your speed and refrain from sounding a horn or causing other loud noises when approaching a horse being driven or ridden upon a public highway.
12. Drivers in Rhode Island are not allowed to operate a motor vehicle upon a public highway while wearing earphones or headsets.
13. If stopped by a law enforcement officer, you are required upon request to display your driver's license and vehicle registration card, and proof of insurance. Further, upon request by a law enforcement officer, you are required to write your name in the presence of that officer for the purpose of being identified.
14. If a law enforcement officer requests you exit your vehicle, you must do so.
15. If stopped by a law enforcement officer at night, a motorist is required to turn on the vehicle's interior lights and leave them on until the officer allows the driver to drive off.
16. All laws are subject to change and, as a driver, you are responsible for the safety of all occupants in your vehicle.

Common Motor Vehicle Violations – Fine Schedule

The following fines are subject to change through statute:

Violation	Statute	Fine
Driving with expired registration	31-3-32	85.00
Driving on expired license	31-10-30	85.00
Obedience to devices (i.e., red light, directional arrows, etc.)	31-13-04	85.00
Eluding traffic light	31-13-6(3)(i)	85.00
Operator left of center	31-15-3	85.00
Overtaking on left	31-15-4	85.00
Overtaking on right	31-15-5(a)	85.00
Clearance for overtaking	31-15-6	85.00
Places where overtaking prohibited	31-15-7	85.00
No passing zone	31-15-8	85.00
Following too closely	31-15-12	85.00
Manner of turning at intersection	31-16-2	85.00
Turn signal required	31-16-5	85.00
Time of signaling turn	31-16-6	85.00
Obedience to stop signs	31-17-4	85.00
Right of way [to pedestrians] in crosswalks	31-18-3	85.00
Safety belt/Child restraint violation	31-22-22(a)	85.00
Times when lights required	31-24-1	85.00
No inspection sticker	31-38-3	85.00
1-10 miles per hour (mph) in excess of posted speed limit $10.00 per mile in excess of speed limit		95.00
11 mph in excess of posted speed limit with a fine of		200.00 minimum
Wireless Communication Devices (Cell phone) (minors)	31-22-11.9	100.00

X. Drinking / Drugs and Driving

A. Effects of Alcohol and Other Drugs on the Body

Alcohol is by far the greatest hazard for a driver. In Rhode Island, the legal drinking age is twenty-one (21). Drunk drivers cause more than half of the collisions in which somebody is killed. More than 10,000 people die each year in alcohol-related collisions in the United States; 1,900 are teenagers. If you drink, even just a little, your chances of a collision are seven (7) times greater than if you don't drink.

Alcohol reaches your brain in seconds affecting it before any other part of the body. Upon reaching the brain, alcohol first affects the control of your judgment and skill. Alcohol will affect your ability to estimate distance (depth perception), speeds and the movement of other vehicles, as well as reducing your ability to handle your own vehicle.

Alcohol slows down normal reflexes, interferes with judgment, and reduces alertness and vision. Some people appear stimulated after drinking. This is because alcohol lowers inhibition and self-control.

A 12-ounce container of beer, a 4-to-5-ounce glass of wine and a 1 to 1 1/2 ounce shot of hard liquor have about the same amount of alcohol per serving. Any amount of alcohol can affect you differently at different times. For example, drinking on an empty stomach will affect the body faster than drinking after eating. Alcohol's effects are greater when you are taking medicine or are tired.

After drinking, there is nothing that will reduce the effects of alcohol except *time*. Coffee, food, fresh air, or exercise might wake an intoxicated person up, but it will not sober them up. The three methods by which the body eliminates alcohol: Breathing, Perspiring, and Oxidation (removed by the liver).

ALMOST ANY DRUG CAN AFFECT YOUR DRIVING SKILL. HERE ARE A FEW THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:

1. Most drugs taken for headaches, colds, hay fever, allergy, or to calm nerves can make you drowsy and can affect your control of a motor vehicle.
2. When taking prescription medicine, it is important to ask your doctor about any possible side effects which relate to driving.
3. Even though certain drugs can make you alert for a short time, later they can make you nervous, dizzy, and unable to concentrate. They can also affect your vision. When they wear off, they can cause the opposite effect, making you tired and less attentive.
4. Tranquilizers or sedatives make you drowsy and make driving very dangerous, especially when mixed with alcohol.
5. Studies have shown that marijuana can have a negative effect on drivers through reduced reaction time, altered attention to the road, and increased lane weaving. Drivers under the influence of marijuana also have longer visual adjustments to headlight glare.
6. Dangerous types of drugs can be obtained illegally. LSD, cocaine, and heroin are examples. They make users unaware or indifferent to their surroundings and unable to drive a motor vehicle safely.
7. Many drugs, both legal and illegal, have unexpected effects when they are taken with alcohol. Alcohol and other drugs should never be used at the same time. Combining alcohol with another drug can cause a synergistic effect, whereby the effects are multiplied. Not only does this pose a serious hazard to your health, but also it can have a disastrous effect on your ability to drive. One drink taken when you are also taking another drug, even a simple allergy or cold remedy, could have the same effect on your driving ability as having several alcoholic beverages. Even worse, it could kill you!

B. Blood Alcohol Concentration

The blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is the ratio of alcohol to blood (to body weight) present in the bloodstream at any given time. In Rhode Island the BAC level is evidence that you are legally intoxicated or unfit to drive. The current BAC level set by law in Rhode Island is different for different ages:

a. Any person of any age with a BAC of .08% or more is intoxicated and will be charged with drunk driving – Driving Under the Influence (DUI).
b. Any person under the age of twenty-one (21) with a BAC of .02% but less than .08% is impaired and will be charged with Driving While Impaired (DWI).

When alcohol enters your stomach, it goes into your blood and to all parts of your body. Your BAC depends on several factors:

1. How much alcohol you have had to drink.
2. How much you weigh.
3. How much food you ate before drinking.
4. How much time you have been drinking.
5. The speed at which your body processes the alcohol in your system, which is different for each person.

C. Implied Consent

Under Rhode Island law 21-27-2.1 Implied consent means that any person who operates a motor vehicle within this state shall be deemed to have given his or her consent to chemical tests of his or her breath, blood, saliva and/or urine for the purpose of determining the chemical content of his or her body fluids or breath. If a driver refuses this testing certain penalties may be imposed.

D. Refusal to Take the Breathalyzer Test

If you refuse to take a chemical test, your license will be suspended for a minimum of six months. You are also subject to a fine, a highway safety assessment, public community service, a course on driving while intoxicated and/or referral to an alcohol treatment program.

E. Penalties

IT IS AGAINST THE LAW FOR A DRIVER OF ANY AGE TO CONSUME AN ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE or DRUG WHILE DRIVING.

Chemical Test Refusal	Under 18 years of age
1st Violation	
■ 6 month license suspension ■ $200 - $500 fine ■ $500 highway safety assessment ■ 10 – 60 hours of community service	■ $200 department of health chemical testing program assessment ■ Special course on driving while intoxicated or under the influence of a controlled substance and/or alcohol/drug treatment
2nd Violation (within a 5 year period)	
■ Up to 6 months of incarceration ■ License suspension until age 21 ■ $600 - $1,000 fine ■ $500 highway safety assessment	■ $200 department of health chemical testing program assessment ■ 60 – 100 hours of community service ■ Alcohol/drug treatment
3rd or subsequent violation (within a 5 year period)	
■ Up to 1 year of incarceration ■ 2 – 5 year license suspension ■ $800 - $1,000 fine ■ $500 highway safety assessment	■ $200 department of health chemical testing program assessment ■ 100 hours or more of community service ■ Alcohol/drug treatment

Driving While Impaired (DWI)	**Under 18 years of age**
BAC 0.02% - 0.08%	
1st Violation	
■ 6 – 12 month license suspension ■ $150 highway safety assessment or community restitution	■ Special course on driving while intoxicated or under the influence of a controlled substance ■ Alcohol/drug treatment
2nd Violation	
■ License suspension until age 21 ■ $150 highway safety assessment or community restitution	■ Special course on driving while intoxicated or under the influence of a controlled substance ■ Alcohol/drug treatment
3rd or Subsequent Violation	
■ Additional 2 year license suspension ■ $150 highway safety assessment or community restitution	■ Special course on driving while intoxicated or under the influence of a controlled substance ■ Alcohol/drug treatment

Driving under the influence (DUI)	**Under 18 years of age**
BAC: 0.08% or above	
1st Violation	
■ 6 – 18 month license suspension ■ $500 highway safety assessment ■ 10 – 60 hours of community service	■ Special course on driving while intoxicated or under the influence of a controlled substance ■ Alcohol/drug education and/or treatment
2nd or subsequent violation	
■ Up to 1 year of incarceration and/or $500 fine ■ License suspension until age 21	■ Special course on driving while intoxicated or under the influence of a controlled substance ■ Alcohol/drug treatment

Driving while impaired (DWI)	**18-21 years of age**
BAC: 0.02% - 0.08%	
1st violation	
■ 1 - 3 month license suspension ■ $250 fine ■ 30 hours of community service	■ Special course on driving while intoxicated or under the I influence of a controlled substance ■ Alcohol/drug treatment
2nd violation	
■ 3 – 6 month license suspension ■ $250 fine ■ $300 highway safety assessment	■ 60 hours of community service ■ Special course on driving while intoxicated or under the influence of a controlled substance ■ Alcohol/drug treatment

Chemical Test Refusal	**Adults**
1st violation	
■ 6 month – 1 year license suspension ■ $200 - $500 fine ■ $500 highway safety assessment ■ 10 – 60 hours of community service	■ $200 department of health chemical testing program assessment ■ Special course on driving while intoxicated or under the influence of a controlled substance and/or alcohol/drug treatment
2nd violation (within a 5 year period) – Misdemeanor	
■ Up to 6 months in prison ■ 1 – 2 year license suspension ■ $600 - $1,000 fine ■ $500 highway safety assessment	■ $200 department of health chemical testing program assessment ■ 60 – 100 hours of community service ■ Alcohol/drug treatment
3rd or subsequent violation (within a 5 year period) – Misdemeanor	
■ Up to 1 year in prison ■ 2 – 5 year license suspension ■ $800 - $1,000 fine ■ $500 highway safety assessment	■ $200 department of health chemical testing program assessment ■ 100 hours or more of community service ■ Alcohol/drug treatment

Driving under the influence (DUI)	21 years of age or older
BAC: 0.08% - 0.1%	
1st violation – Misdemeanor	
■ Up to 1 year in prison ■ 30 – 180 day license suspension ■ $100 - $300 fine ■ $500 highway safety assessment	■ $86 fee ■ 10 – 60 hours of community service ■ Special course on driving while intoxicated or under the influence of a controlled substance and/or alcohol/drug treatment
BAC: 0.1% - 0.15% (or unknown)	
1st violation – Misdemeanor	
■ Up to 1 year in prison ■ 3 – 12-month license suspension ■ $100 - $400 fine ■ $500 highway safety assessment	■ $86 fee ■ 10 – 60 hours of community service ■ Special course on driving while intoxicated or under the influence of a controlled substance and/or alcohol/drug treatment
BAC: 0.15% or above	
1st violation – Misdemeanor	
■ Up to 1 year in prison ■ 3 – 18-month license suspension ■ $500 fine ■ $500 highway safety assessment	■ $86 fee ■ 20 – 60 hours of community service ■ Special course on driving while intoxicated or under influence of a controlled substance and/or alcohol/drug treatment
BAC: 0.08% - 0.15% (or unknown)	
2nd violation (within a 5-year period) – Misdemeanor	
■ 10 days – 1 year in prison ■ 1 – 2-year license suspension ■ Use of ignition interlock system for 1 – 2 years following the completion of the sentence	■ $400 fine ■ $500 highway safety assessment ■ $86 fee ■ Alcohol/drug treatment
BAC: 0.15% or above	
2nd violation (within a 5-year period) – Misdemeanor	
■ 6 months – 1 year in prison ■ 2-year license suspension ■ $1,000 fine	■ $500 highway safety assessment ■ $86 fee ■ Alcohol/drug treatment
BAC: 0.08% - 0.15% (or unknown)	
3rd or subsequent violation (within a 5-year period) – Felony	
■ 1 – 3 years in prison ■ 2 – 3 year license suspension ■ Use of ignition interlock system for 2 years following the completion of the sentence	■ $400 fine ■ $500 highway safety assessment ■ $86 fee ■ Alcohol/drug treatment ■ Seizure of the vehicle by the state
BAC: 0.15% or above	
3rd or subsequent violation (within a 5-year period) – Felony	
■ 3 – 5 years in prison ■ 3-year license suspension following the completion of the sentence ■ $1,000 - $5,000 fine	■ $500 highway safety assessment ■ $86 fee ■ Alcohol/drug treatment ■ Seizure of the vehicle by the state

Driving under the influence (DUI)	Serious bodily injury resulting
1st violation – Felony	
■ 1 – 10 years in prison ■ $1,000 - $5,000 fine	■ Up to 2-year license revocation ■ Alcohol/drug treatment
2nd violation (within a 5-year period) – Felony	
■ 2 – 15 years in prison ■ Up to 4-year license revocation	■ $3,000 - $10,000 fine ■ Alcohol/drug treatment

Driving under the influence (DUI)	Death Resulting
1st violation – Felony	
■ 5 – 15 years in prison ■ 5-year license revocation	■ $5,000 - $10,000 fine ■ Alcohol/drug treatment
2nd or subsequent violation (within 5 years) – Felony	

■ 10 – 20 years in prison	■ $10,000 - $20,000 fine
■ 5-year license revocation	■ Alcohol/drug treatment

R.I.G.L. 3-8-9, Transportation of alcoholic beverages by underage persons. Any person who has not reached his or her twenty-first (21st) birthday and who operates a motor vehicle upon the public highways, except when accompanied by a parent or legal guardian, and, knowingly having liquor or intoxicating beverages in any form in containers, opened or unopened, in any part of the vehicle, shall have his/her license suspended or his/her right to operate a motor vehicle denied for a period of not more than thirty (30) days by the administrator of the division of motor vehicles. This section does not apply to persons between the ages of sixteen (16) and twenty-one (21) who are transporting unopened alcoholic beverages in the course of their employment.

R.I.G.L. 3-8-10, Possession of beverage by underage persons. Any person who has not reached his or her twenty-first (21st) birthday and has in his or her possession any (alcoholic type) beverage as defined in this title shall be fined one hundred fifty dollars ($150) to seven hundred fifty dollars ($750) for the first offense, three hundred dollars ($300) to seven hundred fifty dollars ($750) for the second offense, and four hundred fifty dollars ($450) to seven hundred fifty dollars (($750) for the third or subsequent offense. In addition, any person who violates this section may be required to perform community service and shall be subject to a minimum sixty (60) day suspension of his or her driver's license, and upon a second offense may be ordered to undergo a substance abuse assessment by a licensed substance abuse professional.

XI. In Case of a Collision

A. What to do After a Collision

1. Try to stay calm.
2. Stop your vehicle immediately.
3. Remain at the scene of the collision and make your identity known to any interested person. Severe penalties are imposed against drivers who choose to leave the scene of a collision ('hit and run') without properly identifying themselves.
4. Report all collisions to the nearest state or local police immediately.
5. Request rescue assistance if personal injury is involved.
6. In the event of a minor collision, if possible, drive your vehicle off to the side of the roadway and notify the police.

If you collide with or do damage to a parked vehicle or other property, you must leave your name and address in writing attached securely to such vehicle or property so that the owner may find it when he/she returns to their vehicle or property. Also, report the collision to the nearest state or local police immediately.

A collision involving personal injury or property damage in excess of $1000.00 must additionally be reported to the police.

A police report is required if:

- Someone is injured in the collision.
- Property damage is over $1,000.
- You hit an unattended vehicle.
- You hit a domesticated animal.

B. What to Report if you Have a Collision

Record the following information if you have been involved in a collision:

- **The exact location:** Note the names of the street or streets if the collision was at an intersection. You should also note the number of the house nearest to the collision or the nearest mile marker number on an interstate highway. If possible, note how far it is from any marker such as a telephone pole, railroad crossing, street sign, or highway marker.
- **The exact time of the collision.**
- **The name, address, license, insurance carrier and policy number, and registration state and number of the other driver:** It is your right and the right of the other driver to get this information.
- **The names and addresses of all parties who witnessed the collision, as well as those of the persons in the other vehicle.**
- **The name of the police officer who is at the scene if one arrives.**
- **A description of the exact damage.**
- **A description of any injuries**

C. Common Causes of Collisions

Most collisions can be avoided. Be mindful of the most common causes of motor vehicle collisions:

- Driver/human error
- Speeding
- Driving after drinking and/or ingesting drugs
- Driving too fast for the road conditions – rain/snow/sleet/ice/construction
- Inattentiveness due to wireless communication devices
- Driving too close to the vehicle in front of you – tailgating.
- Driving to the left of the centerline – wrong side of the road
- Not looking when driving away from the curb

- Not yielding the right-of-way
- Vehicle malfunctions – defective vehicle
- Roadways – construction/potholes/gravel/sand

D. Violations Resulting from a Collision

RIGL 31-26-1 Duty to stop in collisions resulting in personal injury [or death] – **Felony**
RIGL 31-26-2 Duty to stop in collisions resulting in damage to vehicle – **Court appearance**
RIGL 31-26-4 Duty on collision with unattended vehicle – **Court appearance**
RIGL 31-26-5 Duty in collision resulting in damage to highway fixtures – **Court appearance**

XII. When Stopped by a Law Enforcement Officer

Listed below are simple suggestions for motorists to follow if they are being stopped by a law enforcement officer: (AAMVA – American Associations of Motor Vehicle Administrators)

- If you are stopped at nighttime, you are required to turn the interior lights on and leave them on until the officer tells you to turn the lights off. Leave your headlights on, as well, for safety reasons.
- When a motorist observes flashing emergency lights or hears sirens, pull over to a safe location, to the right and stop. Then, when the emergency passes, the motorist may return to the travel lane.
- Turn your right directional on and begin to slow down, and eventually pull to the right as far as possible. Do not obstruct traffic, nor block another persons' driveway, etc.
- After you have pulled over and stopped, turn your engine off. Begin to put your window down, anticipating the arrival of the officer to your vehicle.
- Do not take your safety belt off until you are directed to do so by the officer.
- Keep both hands visible on the steering wheel.
- Tell any passengers to put their hands where they can be seen by the officer.
- Do not exit your vehicle unless asked to do so by the officer.
- Do not anticipate what the officers is going to ask for during the motor vehicle stop. In other words, do not reach for any documents until directed to do so by the officer.
- You and your passengers should never make any sudden movements or gestures; reach under seat, lean towards glove box, etc.
- Wait for the officer to ask you for your license, registration, and insurance card (you are required by law to carry each of these items on your person or in your vehicle). Do not hand the officer your license or other documents in a holder. Take them out. Note: Electronic proof of insurance is allowed.
- When the officer returns to the patrol car, do not follow them, unless asked to do so. Wait until the officer returns with your documents.
- If you are being issued a citation, the officer will ask if you want to sign for it. By signing, you are not admitting to the violation, only acknowledging that you have received it. If you agree to sign it, or refuse to sign, it will not change the outcome of the motor vehicle stop.

A. COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY – POLICE RELATIONSHIP ACT OF 2015, R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-21.2

The "Racial Profiling Prevention Act of 2004" found municipal and state law enforcement officers play a vital role in protecting the public from crime. The vast majority of police officers discharge their duties professionally and without bias. The use by police officers of race, ethnicity, or national origin solely in deciding which persons should be subject to traffic stops, searches and seizures is improper. Racial profiling damages law enforcement and the criminal justice system as a whole by undermining public confidence and trust in the police, the courts, and criminal law, and thereby undermining law enforcement efforts and ability to solve and reduce crime.

To learn more about the Comprehensive Community – Police Relationship Act of 2015 and your rights under the law, please refer to Rhode Island General Law 31-21.2. For your convenience we have listed the link below:

http://webserver.rilegislature.gov/Statutes/TITLE31/31-21.2/INDEX.htm

XIII. Equipment You Must Inspect!

To ensure the safety of passengers in your vehicle and other vehicles, you are required by law (R.I.G.L. 31-38-4) to maintain the serviceability of your vehicle and to comply with Rhode Island law with respect to equipment mandated by law.

Seat Belts: Properly worn safety belts can save lives. Lap and shoulder belts working together reduce the risk of death and serious injury by almost 50%. Safety belts will keep you from hitting the steering wheel, dashboard, or other objects in your vehicle. Belts will also keep you inside your vehicle, which is really your only protection in a violent crash.

Airbags: When combined with the shoulder and lap belts, airbags can save lives. Children and infants should always ride in the back seats of vehicles equipped with passenger side air bags. Airbags supplement safety belts. Some motorists may have to move their seats back to establish a safety zone from a deployed airbag.

Tires: You may not drive on a tire that has less than 2/32 of an inch of tread (measure the depth of the tread with a quarter). Never mix and match tires on your vehicle (radial with bias-belted). Use your owner's manual for a schedule of prescribed maintenance checks. In order to receive an accurate reading, measure your tire pressure while your tire is cold.

Brakes: Do not wait for the brake pedal to touch the floor before you schedule repairs. If while braking, your vehicle pulls to one side, or, the pedal feels spongy, follow the prescribed maintenance checks located in your owner's manual. Note, the parking brake serves as a means of stopping a vehicle's movement and therefore, it too must be in proper working order.

Steering: When you turn the steering wheel, there should be no play nor feel loose. If noises occur when you turn the wheel, it may be an indication you need power steering fluid. As with other fluid checks, your owner's manual has scheduled maintenance suggestions for *all* fluids.

Lights: It is the responsibility of the motorist to check his/her headlights, taillights, directional, brake, backup, running, parking, and instrument panel lights to ensure they in fact work. It is also a good idea to clean the grime, dirt, and salt from all lights as you inspect the lighting system. Note: Certain lights must be checked with the assistance of another person.

Safety Sensors: *As snow, ice, or salt grime gathers on cars in winter, many of the sensors that are key to the operation of advanced safety systems can become blocked and shut down. Remember to become familiar with the location of these sensors (if equipped) and check these sensors for obstructions.*

Other equipment: Mirrors, mufflers, horn, and wipers are also important pieces of equipment in/on your vehicle that must be maintained and serviced on a regular basis.

Turn on the ignition switch in almost any car and watch the instrument panel. The modern automobile has an abundance of warning lights that provide valuable information. The list could include:

- Brake system warning
- Windshield washer fluid level
- Engine coolant temperature
- Brake fluid level
- Door ajar
- Headlamp door position
- Check Engine (Emissions)
- High beam indicator
- Tire Pressure Monitoring System
- Low Fuel
- Lamp Out
- Seatbelt light
- Cold engine warning
- Turn signals
- Charging system
- Transmission temperature
- ABS or Anti-lock Brake System indicator light
- SRS or Supplemental Restraint System indicator light (Airbag)
- Brake lining wear indicator light.
- Traction control/Stability control
- Oil Pressure Warning

XIV. Organ and Tissue Donor Program

Currently, more than 90,000 people nationwide await lifesaving organ transplants and many more will require a tissue transplant. Yet, many of them – almost 7,000 – will die this year because of a critical shortage.

You now have an opportunity to consider donating life through organ & tissue donation. You should know that:

- Anyone can be a potential donor, regardless of race or medical history. If you are under 18 years old, you need parental consent.
- It costs nothing to donate.
- All major religions support donation.
- Signing a donor card or having a donor designation on your license will not affect the quality of health care you receive. If you are sick or injured and admitted to the hospital, the first priority of any health care provider is to save your life.
- People receive transplants based on factors like matched blood type, body size, critical need and how long they've been waiting.
- Donation does not interfere with funeral or burial arrangements.

IF YOU DECIDE TO DONATE, HERE'S HOW TO MAKE YOUR WISHES KNOWN:

- **LICENSE DESIGNATION**: Most importantly, ask the DMV to put the donor designation on your license.
- **DONOR CARD**: Sign a card and carry it with you. You can get a donor card from the New England Organ Bank at the number listed below.
- In addition to any of these methods, **BE SURE** to tell your family about your decision to donate.

For more information, contact the New England Organ Bank at 1-800-446-6362 or **www.neob.org.**

XV. Passing Your Driver Skills Test

When reporting for your driving skills test:

- You must have your Learner' permit in your possession. Your learner's permit is your identification to take the driving skills test. Photocopies are not acceptable.
- Your vehicle must be registered in Rhode Island with only two exceptions: If the vehicle is registered to a family member of a military person and/or the military person is stationed in Rhode Island. Valid military ID will be required. All other rules apply.
- A driving school with a valid out-of-state registration must have a current Special Rhode Island Financial Responsibility Insurance Certificate (Form GU-1338b) on file with the Division of Motor Vehicle's Financial Responsibility Section. A copy of this form must also be presented to the examiner at the driving skills test site. All other rules apply.
- You must present the vehicle's valid registration certificate.
- You must present a valid insurance identification card (electronic insurance card).
- There must be two plates on the vehicle.
- The vehicle must have a valid inspection sticker that has not expired (Exception: Vehicles under two (2) years old or with less than 24,000 miles are not required to have an inspection sticker).
- Rental vehicles are not allowed for the driver skills test.
- Vehicles may have only the legal amount of window tint as described in RIGL 31-23.3

Failures must wait at least thirty (30) days before re-taking the driver skills test. If your vehicle is rejected or if you do not have proper documentation, you must re-schedule your driver skills test.

Grounds for immediate termination of the Driver Skills Test:

Lack of or violation of any requirement mentioned above; collision; any motor vehicle violation as defined in Title 31 of the Motor Vehicle Code, 1956 as amended; dangerous actions; leaving the designated roadway; dangerously inexperienced driver; lack of cooperation with the License Examiner, equipment failure or erratic operation of the vehicle.

The video at the link below is meant to be an example of the closed course testing environment and does not show the actual test. The actual test is NOT based on the content of this video and may include components not seen in the video. Drivers will be tested on skills and knowledge as listed in the Rhode Island Driving Manual.

https://dmv.ri.gov/licenses-permits-ids/permits-tests/road-tests

XVI. One Final Word

Driving a motor vehicle is a privilege and not a right. A license to drive brings with it a serious responsibility for the safety of others and yourself. It has been said often that 'the life you save may be your own'. Always drive defensively and carefully. If you do, you will have many years of enjoyment on the road.

XVII. Appendices

A. Miscellaneous Motor Vehicle Laws

R.I.G.L. 31-23.3-2: Nontransparent Windshield and Windows:
No person shall own and operate any motor vehicle upon any public highway, road or street with transparent or sunscreen material, window application, reflective film or non-reflective film used in any way to cover or treat the front windshield, the side windows immediately adjacent to the right and left of the operator's seat, the side windows immediately to the rear of the operator's seat and the front passenger seat and the rear windows unless this vehicle meets one of the criteria set forth in 31-23.3-3. The fine for a violation of this law is $250.00. Rhode Island follows the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards of a total visible light transmittance of not less than seventy percent (70%).

R.I.G.L. 31-23-13.1: Altering height of or operating a motor vehicle with an altered height prohibited: No person shall alter the height of or operate a motor vehicle with an altered height that has an original manufacturer's gross vehicle weight rating of up to and including ten thousand pounds (10,000 lbs.), by elevating or lowering the chassis or body by more than four inches (4") from the original manufacturer's specified height by use of so called 'shackle lift kits' for leaf springs or by use of lifts for coil springs, tires, or any other means or device.

R.I.G.L. 31-45-1: Noise Limits:
(a) No person shall operate a motor vehicle, nor shall the owner of any vehicle allow the vehicle to be operated, at any time, or under any condition of grade, load, acceleration, or deceleration, in such a manner as to exceed the following noise limit based on a distance of fifty feet (50') from the center of the lane of travel within the speed limit. For the purposes of this section, "dbA" means decibels measured with a calibrated sound level meter weighted to the "A" scale.

(b) In speed zones of thirty-five miles per hour (35 mph) or less, not more than eighty-six (86) dbA. In speed zones of more than thirty-five miles per hour (35 mph), not more than ninety (90) dbA.

Note: This law also allows local cities and towns to develop other means to deal with noise regulations.

R.I.G.L. 31-24-22: Multiple beam lamps required:
Except as provided, the head lamps, or the auxiliary driving lamps, or combination of them on motor vehicles other than a motorcycle or a motor-driven cycle, shall be arranged so that selection may be made between distributions of light projected to different elevations.

R.I.G.L. 31-24-47: Regulation and certification of light devices:
The Administrator of the Division of Motor Vehicles is authorized to approve or disapprove lighting devices and to issue and enforce regulations establishing standards and specifications for the approval of such lighting devices, their installation and aiming. The regulations shall correlate with and, so far as possible, conform to the current standards and specifications of the Society of Automotive Engineers applicable to the equipment.

B. Construction and Work Zone Safety Requirements

Each work zone presents a specific set of challenges to motorists; therefore, it is important to remain alert, reduce speed, and be prepared for the potential hazards, which may present themselves as you pass through the construction work zone. Construction signs are in high visibility colors (fluorescent yellow-green, orange, or pink) diamond or rectangular I shape, and posted prior to, within, and after the work zones. High visibility constructions signs warn motorists of potential hazards ahead such as detours, lane closures, uneven pavement,

flaggers, police officers, etc.

- Drive within the posted construction speed limits. Note: Fines are doubled for speeding tickets issued within these designated areas twenty-four (24) hours a day.
- Reduce speed and pay attention. Speed and inattention are two (2) of the most common causes of work zone crashes.
- Dedicate full attention to the roadway.
- Refrain from distracting activities such as talking on the personal wireless communication device (cell phone), changing radio stations, and having a conversation with passengers.
- Pay close attention to signs requiring you to merge.
- Pay attention to the directions given by law enforcement officers and flaggers and do not change lanes within the work zone. Flaggers or law enforcement officers use hand signals or signs to instruct motorists to slow down or stop, as required. Flaggers have the legal authority to control traffic.
- Watch out for workers in the zone as well as their equipment.
- Be aware of potential nighttime work zones.
- Expect the unexpected; work zones change hourly.
- Do not tailgate; most work zone crashes are rear-end collisions.
- Merge early and when it is safe; motorists can help maintain traffic flow by moving to the appropriate lane at first notice.
- Stay calm; it is for the improvement of the roads for everyone.

Motorists should be aware of other warning devices used in the work zone such as cones, barrels, tubes, panels, barricades, flashing arrow boards, and temporary roadway markings.

C. Directions to CCRI

Warwick: **Knight Campus, 400 East Avenue, Warwick, RI 02886 – (401-825-1214)**
https://goo.gl/maps/Fw9i1hbEA5eVjgZ29

Lincoln: **Flanagan Campus, 1762 Louisquisset Pike, Lincoln, RI 02865 – (401-825-1214)**
https://goo.gl/maps/oPdJmk3UwLGhM6kt6

Providence: **Liston Campus, 1 Hilton Street, Providence, RI 02905 – (401-825-1214)**
https://goo.gl/maps/KF2KYi2gawfr2azg8

Newport: **1 John H Chafee Boulevard, Newport RI, 02840 – (401-825-1214)**
https://goo.gl/maps/y1phJ8qA8qpABrXE9

D. Driver's Education Completion Certificates

Duplicate/Replacement Certificates

Students who took Driver's Education at CCRI and need a Rhode Island driver education certificate of completion because you have lost the original, call 401-825-1214 or email WorkForceTransportation@ccri.edu
*Certification for courses completed at other authorized RI Driving Schools, must contact their provider.

Certification for courses taken out of State of Rhode Island

Requirements for Transferring Out of State Certificates/Permits/Licenses to Rhode Island.
Listed below are requirements necessary for **new Rhode Island residents** to obtain a Rhode Island Certificate of Completion for Driver Education. This information refers to individuals

presently in possession of active 'out of state' permits, certificates of completion (from certified driver education programs) and/or operator's license (under eighteen (18) years of age). The procedure instructs new Rhode Island residents on the required materials necessary for an under eighteen (18) year old to comply with Rhode Island driver education standards (laws).

Follow these steps.

1. Completion of thirty-three (33) classroom hours from an accredited secondary education institution that follows national acceptable 'best practice' teaching of material to under eighteen (18) year old potential licensees.
2. Classroom hours cannot be combined with in-car practice/training to meet the Rhode Island requirement of thirty-three (33) classroom hours.
3. New residents with out-of-state permits, certificates of completion, etc., must show documented proof of a minimum of eight (8) classroom hours of classroom instruction on the problems and penalties associated with alcohol/drug consumption and driving.
4. New residents must show documented proof of material curriculum on the 'organ donor' options.
5. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant from out of state to present a curriculum (from state program) and certificate from the state in which they received driver education.
6. Applicants producing original (not copies) of the documentation for the requirements as stated above may be eligible to attend a minimum of three (3) classroom hours on Rhode Island law and relevant driver education information. The cost of the (3) hour class is $20.00.

a. When the student has completed the three (3) hours, a certificate of completion is issued from the Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI). The certificate will be mailed to the student's in state residence.

b. With the certificate of completion the applicant can make an online Reservation with the Division of Motor Vehicles, 600 New London Avenue, Cranston RI 02920 and take the knowledge exam. All new residents, under eighteen (18) years of age must take a knowledge exam and subsequent driving skills test.

*Note: Out of state permits and junior licenses satisfy the general curriculum requirements, but do not apply to Rhode Island specific laws on alcohol, organ donor and state and local laws.

Please note: According to Rhode Island General Law, all out-of-state driver education programs must be recognized by the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education as equivalent to the CCRI program.

E. DMV Online Transactions – www.dmv.ri.gov

Online Services

The Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) allows you to complete several transactions online from the comfort of your home at www.dmv.ri.gov. Find out how to reserve a vanity plate, renew your vehicle registration, or obtain your certified driver record online. Below is a full listing of all DMV online services.

- Cancel Registration
  Cancel an existing Rhode Island registration. All cancellations are final.
- Commercial License Medical Certificate
- Change Your Address
  Changing your address is quick and easy online.
- Check My License Status
  Check the status of your driver's license on record with the DMV.
- License/State ID/CDL Renewal
  Renew your driver's license, State ID card, or CDL online.

*(NOTE: Proceeding with this transaction will generate a receipt **WITHOUT** your photo on it. If you require a temporary credential with your photo on it, then an in-person reservation is required. Please do not use this transaction.)*

- Duplicate Driver's License

Request a duplicate of your existing license.

*(NOTE: Proceeding with this transaction will generate a receipt **WITHOUT** your photo on it. If you require a temporary credential with your photo on it, then an in-person reservation is required. Please do not use this transaction.)*

- Duplicate Registration
  Request a duplicate of your Existing Registration.
- Flashing Light Permits
  Apply for a Flashing Light Permit.
- Insurance Revocation Reinstatement
  Online insurance revocation reinstatement process.
- License Reinstatement Failure to Pay/Appear
  Reinstate your license privileges if you have been suspended for a failure to pay or failure to appear.
- Licensed Driver Records
  Download a copy of your driver record online.
- Plate Remake / Plate Design Change
  Order a remake of your existing plate or order your plate in a different design.
- Oversize/Overweight Trucking Permits
- Registration Renewal

Registration Renewal Troubleshooting file, less than 1mbmegabytes

- Registration Status Check
  Check the status of your Rhode Island registration.
- Road Skill Test Appointments
  Schedule, reschedule or cancel your road skills test appointment online.
- Temporary IRP Permits
  Purchase and print temporary IRP trucking permits.
- Vanity Plate Reservations
  Online reservation service for a Rhode Island vanity license plate.

Subscriber Services

Certain RI.gov services are available only to RI.gov subscribers. If you are not a RI.gov subscriber but are interested in becoming one, please visit https://www.ri.gov/subscriber/. Subscribers will also need to have a signed Certificate of Acceptable Use Policy on file with the Rhode Island DMV to access these services.

- Customer Inquiry
  Determine whether there may be a block or suspension on your record.
- Dealership Temporary Plate Registration
- SI-1 Auto Lien Holder Registration
  Complete and submit motor vehicle security interests (liens) electronically.
- Title Inquiry
  Online access to motor vehicle title records on file with the DMV.

RENEWING YOUR DRIVER'S LICENSE

Renewing your license online line is fast and easy. Save yourself some time and go to www.dmv.ri.gov to renew. To renew your license in person, you can go to any DMV branch office or a AAA branch (if you are a current member). Please have your current license and completed renewal form with you. If you did not receive a renewal form in the mail, just bring your current license with you. To change or correct your address on your license at the time you are renewing, you need to bring proof of your new address. Please go to Section G to find a list of acceptable Proof of Residency documents.

- You can renew your driver's license up to 90 days before its expiration date. Renewals can now be done online at www.dmv.ri.gov, at any one of the branch offices during regular business hours, or at AAA branch offices (members only).
- Your license is valid for a maximum of five (5) years. For customers 71 years of age and older, your license expiration date will be prorated as well as the renewal fee. You can check the

prorated renewal fees on the DMV Fee Table at www.dmv.ri.gov. The prorated renewal schedule is as follows:

1. Age 71, every (4) years
2. Age 72, every (3) years
3. Age 73 and older, every (2) years.

CHANGING YOUR NAME OR ADDRESS

Address Change

You can now change your address online at www.dmv.ri.gov. To get a new photo license with your new address you need to appear in person at any DMV branch office during regular business hours with your current license and proof of residency. Please see Appendix G, Identification Requirements and Acceptable Documents, for acceptable residency documents.

If you do not want a new photo license, you may simply complete the Change of Address form and mail the completed form to the DMV. The form can be found on the DMV website at www.dmv.ri.gov. The mailing address is 600 New London Avenue, Cranston, RI 02920. There is no fee for this address change. Print your new address on the back of the license in the space provided.

Name Change

To change your name on your Rhode Island license, you are required to change your name with the Social Security Administration first. Please allow at least twenty-four (24) hours for Social Security to make the change to their records before changing your name with the DMV. After Social Security has competed the name change you must appear in person at the DMV branch office during regular business hours, and bring the following documents:

- Your current Rhode Island license.
- Original government issued document indicating name change (ex. Marriage Certificate or Divorce Decree)
- There is a fee to change any information on a license. Please refer to the DMV website for current fees.

Please remember that the name change can only be completed after social security has changed their records.

LOST OR DAMAGED LICENSES

If you lose or misplace your valid Rhode Island License, the DMV will issue a new copy. When applying for the duplicate license, you must show one identity document (legal name and date of birth). Please see Appendix G, Identification Requirements and Acceptable Documents, for acceptable identity documents.

F. License & ID Card Identification Requirements and Acceptable Documents

Non-Real ID License & ID Card - Proof of Identity Documents

You must present one (1). These documents must bear the applicant's legal name and date of birth.

- A valid, unexpired U.S. passport.
- A certified copy of a birth certificate filed with a State Office of Vital Statistics or equivalent agency in the individual's State of birth.
- A Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA) issued by the U.S. Department of State, Form FS-240, DS-1350 or FS-545.
- A valid, unexpired Permanent Resident Card (Form I-551) issued by DHS or INS.

- An unexpired Employment Authorization Document (EAD) issued by DHS, Form I-766 or Form I-688B.
- An unexpired foreign passport with a valid, unexpired U.S. visa affixed accompanied by the approved I-94 form documenting the applicant's most recent admittance into the U.S.
- A Certificate of Naturalization issued by DHS, Form N-550 or Form N-570.
- A Certificate of Citizenship, Form N-560 or Form N-561, issued by DHS.
- A U.S. Active Service, Retiree, or Reservist Military ID Card.
- A Native American Tribal ID Card.
- A valid U.S. Driver's License with photograph, signature, and date of birth (must not be expired for more than five years).
- A valid U.S. Territory Driver's License with photograph, signature, and date of birth (must not be expired for more than five years).
- A valid Canadian Driver's License with photograph, signature, and date of birth (must not be expired for more than five years); or
- An employment authorization document (EAD) issued by DHS, Form I-766, that indicates a grant of deferred action under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Program.

Non-Real ID License & ID Card - Proof of Residency Documents

You must present two (2) Residency Documents. Residency Documents can be in the name of the applicant, an immediate family member, or someone with the same last name.

- A utility bill (gas, electric, telephone, cable, oil, water, sewer, satellite, heat, cell phone) with the address of residence clearly stated in the applicant's name or in the name of a member of the applicant's immediate family dated within the past sixty (60) days.
- A personal check or bank statement with the applicant's name and address of residence dated within the past sixty (60) days.
- A payroll check with the applicant's name and address of residence dated within the past sixty (60) days.
- A lease agreement currently in effect. The lease agreement must contain the applicant's name and address of residence and the landlord's name, address, and telephone number. Handwritten lease agreements will not be accepted.
- A letter issued by a Rhode Island state agency or a federal agency with the applicant's name and address of residence approving name and address of residence and the landlord's name, address, and telephone number.
- A homeowner's or renter's insurance policy for the applicant's home or apartment with the applicant's name and address of residence that is currently in effect.
- An automobile insurance policy for the applicant's motor vehicle with the applicant's name and address of residence that is currently in effect.
- A property tax bill for the applicant's residence from the immediately preceding year.
- A letter from a Rhode Island shelter or halfway house indicating that the
- applicant resides at the facility. Such a letter must be on letterhead, must be dated within the past thirty (30) days and must include the name and contact information of an administrator of the shelter or halfway house; or
- A jury duty summons dated within the past sixty (60) days.
- A W-2 form with the applicant's name and address of residence from the immediately preceding year.
- An installment loan contract (automobile, student loan) with the applicant's name and address of residence that is currently in effect.
- A current Social Security Administration statement with the

applicant's name and address of residence.
- A current pension or retirement account statement with the applicant's name and address of residence.
- A Rhode Island-issued firearms permit with the applicant's name and address if residence that is currently in effect, or
- A valid Rhode Island driver's license or identification card.

If the applicant is a minor, in addition to any of the proof of residency documents listed above, the following are accepted:

- A school record from the current school year (report card, diploma, transcript, or ID card) stating the student's address of residence (past year if during summer vacation)
- The Rhode Island driver's license or identification card of the individual signing the minor's application.

Note: All U.S. Territories driver's license transfers are only done at the DMV Cranston Headquarters with approval from Enforcement. These transactions are not performed at any DMV or AAA branch office.

Real ID License & ID Card - Proof of Identity Documents

You must present one (1) identity document. The presented document must bear the applicant's legal name and date of birth. If there is a name change contained on the applicant's primary identity document, the name change must be verified with a document issued by an authorized government agency.

ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS ONLY – NO PHOTOCOPIES

- A valid, unexpired U.S. passport.
- A certified copy of a birth certificate filed with a State Office of Vital Statistics or equivalent agency in the individual's State of birth.
- A Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA) issued by the U.S. Department of State, Form FS-240, DS-1350 or FS-545.
- A valid, unexpired Permanent Resident Card (Form I-551) issued by DHS or INS.
- An unexpired Employment Authorization Document (EAD) issued by DHS, Form I-766 or Form I-688B.
- An unexpired foreign passport with a valid, unexpired U.S. visa affixed accompanied by the approved I-94 form documenting the applicant's most recent admittance into the U.S.
- A Certificate of Naturalization issued by DHS, Form N-550 or Form N-570; or
- A Certificate of Citizenship, Form N-560 or Form N-561, issued by DHS.

If you have obtained or renewed your passport within the last 6 months, please bring an additional Identity Document, as your passport may not verify with the national database.

Real ID Proof of Residency Documents List

You must present two (2) Residency Documents. Residency Documents can be in the name of the applicant, an immediate family member, or someone with the same last name. P.O. Box addresses will not be accepted.

- A utility bill (gas, electric, telephone, cable, oil, water, sewer, satellite, heat, cell phone) with the address of residence clearly stated in the applicant's name or in the name of a member of the applicant's immediate family dated within the past sixty (60) days.
- A personal check or bank statement with the applicant's name and address

of residence dated within the past sixty (60) days.
- A payroll check with the applicant's name and address of residence dated within the past sixty (60) days.
- A lease agreement currently in effect. The lease agreement must contain the applicant's name and address of residence and the landlord's name, address, and telephone number. Handwritten lease agreements **will not** be accepted.
- A letter issued by a Rhode Island state agency or a federal agency with the applicant's name and address of residence approving name and address of residence approving the applicant's receipt of benefits from an entitlement program dated within the past sixty (60) days.
- A homeowner's or renter's insurance policy for the applicant's home or apartment with the applicant's name and address of residence that is currently in effect.
- An automobile insurance policy for the applicant's motor vehicle with the applicant's name and address of residence that is currently in effect.
- A property tax bill for the applicant's residence from the immediately preceding year.
- A letter from a Rhode Island shelter or halfway house indicating that the applicant resides at the facility. Such a letter must be on letterhead, must be dated within the past thirty (30) days and must include the name and contact information of an administrator of the shelter or halfway house; or
- A jury duty summons dated within the past sixty (60) days.
- A W-2 form with the applicant's name and address of residence from the immediately preceding year.
- An installment loan contract (automobile, student loan) with the applicant's name and address of residence that is currently in effect.
- A current Social Security Administration statement with the applicant's name and address of residence.
- A current pension or retirement account statement with the applicant's name and address of residence; A Rhode Island-issued firearms permit with the applicant's name and address if residence that is currently in effect; or
- A valid Rhode Island driver's license or identification card.

If the applicant is a minor, in addition to any of the proof of residency documents listed above, the following are accepted:

- A school record from the current school year (report card, diploma, transcript, or ID card) stating the student's address of residence (past year if during summer vacation)
- The Rhode Island driver's license or identification card of the individual signing the minor's application.

Note: All U.S. Territories driver's license transfers are only done at the DMV Cranston Headquarters with approval from Enforcement. These transactions are not performed at any DMV or AAA branch office.

Drivers' Privilege Card/Permit - Proof of Identity Documents

Driver Privilege Cards will be available beginning in July of 2023. Please go to the DMV website at www.dmv.ri.gov for updates, reservations, answers to the most frequently asked questions, and a document checklist. The document checklist is in both English and Spanish.
When applying for a Driver Privilege Card applicants must present two (2) Primary Identity Documents or (1) Primary Identity Document and one (1) Secondary Identity Document. Proof of identity documents in a language other than English must be accompanied by a certified English translation of such document. Proof of change to the name on any proof of identity documents must be demonstrated with a document issued by an authorized government agency. Primary documents

must bear the applicant's legal name and date of birth.

Proof of Taxation

Driver Privilege Card/Permit applicants must provide verification from the tax administrator that they have either filed a personal income tax return as a Rhode Island resident for the tax year preceding the date of application or have been claimed as a dependent on a personal income tax return by an individual who has filed a personal income tax return as a Rhode Island resident for the tax year preceding the date of application. Please go to www.tax.ri.gov for more information.

Driver Privilege Card/Permit - Primary Identity Documents

Applicants must present two (2) Primary Identity Documents or (1) Primary Identity Document and one (1) Secondary Identity Document. Proof of identity documents in a language other than English must be accompanied by a certified English translation of such document. Proof of change to the name on any proof of identity documents must be demonstrated with a document issued by an authorized government agency. Documents must bear the applicant's legal name and date of birth.
Must present two (2) Primary Identity Documents or (1) Primary Identity Document and one (1) Secondary Identity Document

- A valid foreign passport issued by an applicant's country of citizenship that is unexpired or expired for less than five (5) years.
- A valid, unexpired consular identification document issued by an applicant's country of citizenship
- An employment authorization document.
- A refugee travel document (I-571)
- A valid driver's license issued by a state of the United States with the applicant's photograph, signature, and date of birth that is unexpired or expired for less than five (5) years

Driver Privilege Card/Permit Secondary Identity Documents

One (1) Secondary Document will be accepted if accompted by a Primary Identity Document.

- Must bear the applicant's legal name Applicants must present one (1) Secondary Identity Document if they do not present two (2) Primary Identity Documents.
- A valid driver privilege card or state identification card issued by a state or territory of the United States that is unexpired or expired for less than five (5) years.
- An original or certified copy of a foreign birth certificate.
- A foreign driver's license o A valid foreign national identification card.
- A marriage certificate issued by a state or territory of the U.S.
- A divorce decree issued by a state or territory of the United States.
- A court order for adoption, name change, or gender change issued by a court of the United States or a court of a state of the United States that contains a court seal.
- A U.S. permit to Reenter Travel Document (I-327).
- A USCIS form I-797.
- A certified copy of school records or a school transcript issued by a school accredited by a state, jurisdiction, or territory of the United States.
- A U.S. Merchant Mariners Card. A U.S. Selective Service Card.
- A U.S. Military DD214 or DD256 o A Veteran Administration Identification card with photograph.
- A Transportation Workers Identification Credential.
- A U.S. Active Duty/Retiree/Reservist/Dependent Military ID card (DD-2 or Common Access card).
- A U.S. Customs and Border Protection FAST card.
- An individual taxpayer identification number assignment letter.

Drivers' Privilege Card/Permit - Proof of Residency

- A utility bill (gas, electric, telephone, cable, oil, water, sewer, satellite, heat, cell phone) with the address of residence clearly stated, in the applicant's name or in the name of a member of the applicant's immediate family, dated within the past sixty (60) days o A personal check or bank statement with the applicant's name and address of residence dated within the past sixty (60) days,
- A payroll check with the applicant's name and address of residence dated within the past sixty (60) days.
- A lease agreement currently in effect. The lease agreement must contain the applicant's name and address of residence and the landlord's name, address, and telephone number. Handwritten lease agreements **will not** be accepted.
- A letter issued by a Rhode Island state agency or a federal agency with the applicant's name and address of residence approving the applicant's receipt of benefits from an entitlement program dated within the past sixty (60) days.
- A homeowner's or renter's insurance policy for the applicant's home or apartment with the applicant's name and address of residence that is currently in effect.
- An automobile insurance policy for the applicant's motor vehicle with the applicant's name and address of residence that is currently in effect.
- A property tax bill for the applicant's residence from the immediately preceding year.
- A letter from a RI shelter or halfway house indicating the applicant resides there. The letter must be on letterhead, dated within the past thirty (30) days, and include the name and contact information of an administrator of the shelter or halfway house.
- A jury duty summons dated within the past sixty (60) days.
- A W-2 form with the applicant's name and address of residence from the immediately preceding year.
- An installment loan contract (automobile, student loan) with the applicant's name and address of residence that is currently in effect.
- A current Social Security Administration statement with the applicant's name and address of residence.
- A current pension or retirement account statement with the applicant's name and address of residence.
- A Rhode Island-issued firearms permit with the applicant's name and address of residence that is currently in effect.
- A valid Rhode Island driver's license or ID card.

If an applicant is a minor, the following Proof of Residency documents are also accepted:

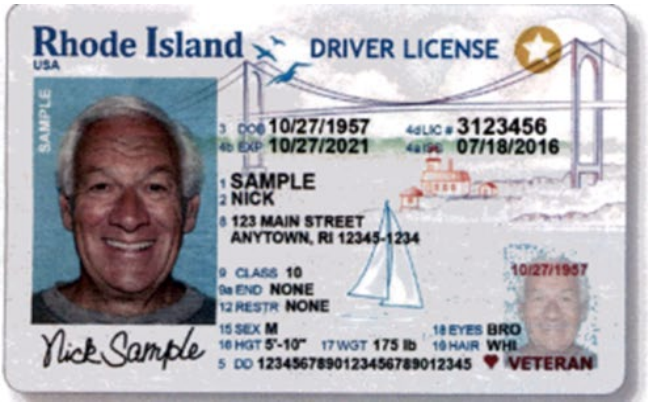
- A school record from the current school year (report card, diploma, transcript, or ID card) stating the student's address of residence (past year if during summer vacation).
- The Rhode Island driver's license or identification card of the individual signing the minor's application.

Social Security Number

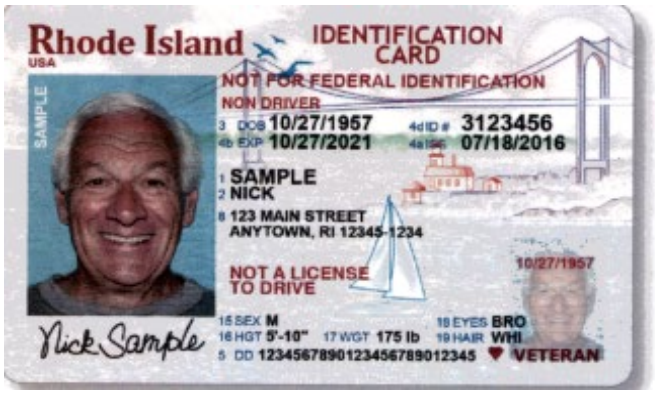
The Division of Motor Vehicles is required by law to record Social Security Numbers for all applicants for a Driver's License. All social security numbers are verified electronically with the Social Security Administration. If you do not have a valid social security number, you must present a foreign passport and appropriate visa, or a Social Security Denial Letter from the Social Security Administration. A Social Security Number or a or a Social Security Denial Letter is not required for a Driver Privilege Card. Please see pages 74-76 for Driver Privilege Card/Permit document information.

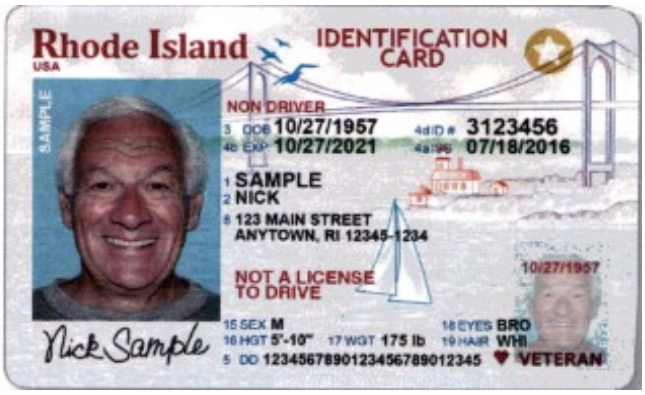
Rhode Island License Examples

Below are examples of Rhode Island Driver's licenses. Please note that licenses with a "star" indicate a Real ID.

















Index

A

ABS – Anti-lock Braking System 43, 68
Acceleration lanes 35
Aggressive driving..... 23-24, 56-57
Airbags 68
Alcohol 21, 60-63

B

Basic speed law..... 36
Bicycle(s) 19, 38, 41, 48, 54-56
Blind spot 32-34, 44, 48, 52
Blowout 43
Brake failure..... 43

C

Carbon monoxide poisoning 47
Cellular phone 18, 36, 44
Child restraint law..... 26
Collision ..... 17-21, 26, 29, 36, 41, 43-45, 50, 52-53, ... 60,65-66, 70
Closed course..... 70
Construction 19, 36, 65-66, 72-73
Construction signs..... 72
Counter-steer 44
Cover the brake..... 41

D

Deceleration lanes..... 35
Defensive driving..... 50
Driver privilege card..... 79-81
Driving skills test..... 12-16, 26, 30, 70, 74
Drugs..... 17, 60, 65

E

Engine failure 44

F

Fire 46
Four (4) second stopping rule..... 48
Freeway driving..... 34-35

G

Graduated licensing system..... 10, 15

H

Hand signals..... 38, 73
Harold L. Smith..... 50
Headlights..... 13, 24, 34, 44-45, 48, 50, 52-53, 56, ... 58, 60, 67-68
Highway hypnosis 35
Horse 58
Hydroplaning 28

I

Implied consent 61
Inspection..... 13, 15, 70
Insurance..... 13, 15, 58, 65, 67, 70, 75, 77, 79, 81
IPDE..... 50

L

Lane changes..... 33, 35-36, 48
Lane position..... 29, 40, 48, 51
License suspension..... 15, 61-64
Learner Instructional Permit..... 10-12, 14-15

M

Motorcycles 48, 72

N

No zones 52
Noise limits 72
Nontransparent Windshield and Windows..... 72

O

Off road recovery 83
Orderly visual search pattern 50
Organ and tissue donor program..... 69

P

Parallel parking..... 12, 32, 55
Park on hills 32
Passing..... 24, 33-36, 38-39, 41, 48, 54-56
Pedestrians..... 19, 29-31, 33-36, 40-42, 53-54, 56, 58
Protected turn lane..... 41

R

Racial profiling 67
Railroad crossing 33-34, 46, 54, 65
Right turn on red..... 41
Right-of-way ..... 29-30, 36, 40-41, 53, 54 ,66
Road rage 23-24, 35
Road test (Driving skills test)..... 12-14, 15-16, 30, 70, 74
Roadway markings..... 38, 46, 73
Rotary/roundabout..... 40-41

S

Safe Driving on the Highway 35-36
School Buses 54, 58
Seat Belts 26,46,68
Signals ..13, 21, 24, 35, 38, 40-41, 46, 48, 53, 58,68, 73
Signs ..... 19-21, 30, 32-34, 38, 40-41, 46, 54-55, 58-59 ..... 72-73, 85-86
Skid 43
Starting On a Hill..... 33
Steering..... 14, 17-18, 26, 28, 30-31, 43-44, 50, 52 67-68
Stopping distance..... 28, 48
Supervising driver..... 11-16

T

Tailgating..... 52, 56, 65
Three-second rule..... 50
Tires..... 13, 21, 28, 34, 44, 47, 68, 72
Trucks 35, 46, 48, 52, 54
Turnabouts..... 30
Turn signals..... 13, 24, 35, 48, 68

U

Uncontrolled intersections 41

V

Vehicle in water 46
Velocitizing..... 28, 34
Vision test..... 11

Z

Zone system 50

DMV Locations and Hours

OFFICE ADDRESSES

Cranston (Main Office): 600 New London Avenue, Cranston, RI 02920
Phone: 401-462-4368
Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Middletown: 52 Valley Road, Middletown, RI 02842
Phone: 401-846-451
Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Wakefield: Stedman Government Center, 4808 Tower Hill Road, Wakefield, RI 02879
Phone: 401-789-1430
Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Warren
Hours: Closed

Westerly Drop Box: Westerly Town Hall, 45 Broad Street, Westerly, RI 02891
Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Woonsocket: 2000 Diamond Hill Road, Woonsocket, RI 02895
Phone: 401-356-4031
Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

For days and hours of operation for each office, please visit the DMV website
www.dmv.ri.gov

DMV Business Office Telephone Numbers

Main Information	(401) 462-4368
Adjudication Office	(401) 462-0800
Automobile Dealers' License & Regulation	(401) 462-5746
Cashiers	(401) 462-5721
Directions to Offices	(401) 462-4368
Disability Parking	(401) 462-5758
Enforcement	(401) 462-5736
Financial Responsibility	(401) 462-9246
Insurance Verification	(401) 462-5870
Plates	(401) 462-5802
Road Skills Tests	(401) 462-5750
Safety & Emission Control	(401) 462-5890
Sales Tax (Motor Vehicles ONLY)	(401) 574-8777
School Bus Safety	(401) 462-5772
Tax Delinquent	(401) 462-5720
Titles	(401) 462-5774

For more information, forms, and online services, please visit the DMV website
www.dmv.ri.gov

SIGNS

Regulatory Signs



Stop



Yield



Do Not Enter


No Left Turn



No Parking


No Trucks


No U-Turn



Wrong Way



No Parking



No Passing Zone



One Way



One Way



Speed Limit


Keep Right



No Right Turn On Red



Right Turn Only



Restricted Lane

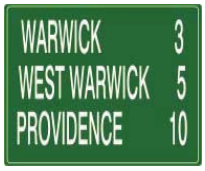

Right or Straight


Left or Straight



Lane Restrictions

Guide Signs



Freeway Direction



Exit Ahead



Exit



Mile Marker



Telephone


Hotels



Hospital


Food



Tourist Attraction



R.I. Route



U.S. Route



Interstate Route

SIGNS

Warning Signs



Yield Sign Ahead



Traffic Signal Ahead



Stop Sign Ahead



No Passing Zone



Slow Moving Vehicle



Railroad Crossing Ahead



Railroad Crossing Here



Road Alignment (curve)



School Crossing



Detour



Entering Divided Highway



Leaving Divided Highway



Left Curve



Right Curve



Winding Road



Side Road (right)



Traffic Island



Intersection



Fire Station



Pedestrian Crossing



Object Markers (bridges)



Road Narrows (from right)



Added lane (from left)



Tractor Crossing



Deer Crossing



Bicycle Crossing



Ramp Speed Advisory



Intersection



Playground



Two-Way Traffic



Narrow Bridge



Hill



Road End Marker



Object Marker



Slippery When Wet



Construction Speed



Flag person Ahead



Road Work



Construction