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Restrictions for Newly Licensed 16 and 17-Year-Old Drivers

If you have your learner's permit, be aware of the [passenger restriction laws for learner's permit holders](#).

After obtaining a driver's license, 16 and 17-year-old drivers may always drive alone. The law limits passengers during the first six months of holding their license. In addition, other restrictions apply until a driver is eighteen years of age.

- Passenger restrictions during the first three months:**
Only parents or a legal guardian (at least one of whom holds a motor vehicle operator's license), or not more than one passenger who is a driving instructor licensed by the DMV, or a person 20 years of age or older who has held a license for 4 years and has not had his or her license suspended during that four year period.
- Passenger restrictions during the second three months:** The ONLY ADDITIONAL passengers allowed are members of the teenage driver's immediate family.

The restrictions concerning passengers will carry a penalty for a violation, which will be an infraction and fine. In the case of a driver who is convicted of a second violation, the law permits the Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles to suspend the license of the driver until he or she is 18 years of age.
- Until their 18th birthday, teenage drivers may not transport more passengers than the number of seat belts in the vehicle.
- Until his or her 18th birthday, a driver may not operate any vehicle that requires a public passenger transportation permit, or a vanpool vehicle.
- Any driver issued a motorcycle endorsement may NOT transport a passenger for six months after obtaining the endorsement.
- Driving is prohibited between the hours of midnight and 5 a.m. unless the individual is traveling for employment, school, religious activities or for a medical necessity, or if the individual is an assigned driver in a Safe Ride program.
- Until their 18th birthday, teenage drivers may not use cell phones (even if they are "hands-free") or mobile electronic devices while they are driving.



A "mobile electronic device" includes any hand-held computer or other device with any type of video display.

These restrictions do not apply to persons who are active members of a volunteer fire company or department, a volunteer ambulance service or company, or an emergency medical service organization who are responding to an emergency call or carrying out their duties as an active member.

Listen to Podcast on:

[Restrictions Imposed on Teenage Drivers](#) 

DMV's Kelly Manning interviews Bureau Chief John Yacavone of Legal Services (Posted: 7/5/06)

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