



# Best practices for graduated driver licensing in Canada



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# Best Practices for Graduated Driver Licensing in Canada

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# Executive Summary

This report describes best practices for graduated driver licensing (GDL) programs for new drivers in Canada. It is intended to set the standards for the development of new programs in Canada and for enhancing the effectiveness of those already in place. The report contains: a detailed description of current GDL programs in Canada; a comparison of these programs to GDL programs elsewhere; a description of the safety benefits of GDL, including the features that have been shown to contribute to their effectiveness; and, based on these findings, a description of best practices for GDL programs.

A central and fundamental issue is whether GDL should apply to all novices or just those who are young. Certainly, both groups are at risk because they are inexperienced; young beginners are at even greater risk owing to the additional influence of age-related factors, such as peer pressure and thrill seeking. Accordingly, jurisdictions in Canada that have already adopted GDL programs have applied it to all beginners – this practice is to be encouraged, especially since evaluations have shown that the collision reductions from these GDL programs extend to novice drivers of all ages. For the same reasons, New Zealand, whose GDL program originally applied only to drivers under the age of 25, has extended its program to all novice drivers, regardless of age.

GDL is by definition multi-staged, and research has clearly demonstrated the safety value of this approach over more conventional ones. Accordingly, most GDL programs include a multi-stage system that has, at a minimum, a learner stage and an intermediate stage before graduation to a full licence.

The report describes best practices for the structure and content of these two stages.

## Learner Stage

The recommended best practices for the learner stage are described briefly below.

- ❑ **Minimum entry age.** The minimum entry age should be 16, which is already the case in most GDL programs in Canada.
- ❑ **Entry requirements.** To enter the GDL program, beginners should pass a vision test and a knowledge test on the rules of the road and safe driving practices. Parental consent should be required for beginners under age 19.
- ❑ **Minimum duration.** The minimum duration should be 12 months, which is presently the case in only a few jurisdictions in Canada.
- ❑ **Maximum holding period.** The maximum holding period should be 24 months at which time the learner should be given a choice of remaining on the learner stage and being re-tested for knowledge, or advancing to the intermediate stage with appropriate testing.



- ❑ **Supervisory driver.** Driving should be permitted only under the supervision of a driver: who has been fully licensed for one year, is at least 25 years old, and is seated in the front seat.
- ❑ **Supervised driving.** During this critical “learning” stage, the novice should be required to have a minimum of 50 hours of practice, including 10 at night and 10 different hours in winter conditions, certified by their supervisor and/or parent.
- ❑ **Driver education and training.** Driver education and training should be available on a voluntary basis and encouraged because it appears to be the most efficient way to acquire basic operating skills as well as motivations and attitudes. Such programs also provide a means to practice and gain needed driving experience in low risk situations, under the supervision of a qualified instructor. However, until research has demonstrated the crash reduction benefits of driver education and training, it should not receive special status, such as being allowed to substitute for time in the system. Successful completion of driver education and training should not be recognized through a “time discount”, because this practice has been shown to have negative safety consequences.
- ❑ **BAC.** A zero BAC limit should apply. The supervisor should also be restricted to a low or zero BAC.
- ❑ **Night restriction.** Driving should be prohibited at night, particularly during the high risk hours of midnight to 6:00 a.m.
- ❑ **Passenger restriction.** No passengers, with the exception of the supervisor.
- ❑ **“L” sign/Plate.** The beginner should be required to display an “L” sign/plate in/on the vehicle to alert other road users of their learner status and to assist police in enforcing GDL conditions.
- ❑ **Minimum exit age.** Given that the minimum entry age is 16 and the minimum duration of this stage is 12 months, the minimum exit age should be 17.
- ❑ **Other features.** GDL programs in Canada already apply penalties, such as fines, demerit points, and suspensions/prohibitions for violations of GDL conditions, and this practice should be continued. During both the learner and intermediate stages, learners should also be subject to lower demerit point thresholds than fully licensed drivers. When licence suspensions or driving prohibitions are applied, novices should have to begin the stage again and/or the stage should be extended by the duration of the suspension to ensure that the learner has the full amount of driving experience before progressing to the next stage. A crash- and violation-free record should be requirements for the duration of the stage to encourage learners to drive safely.

The list of recommended best practices is extensive and it is unlikely that any jurisdiction will adopt all of them. At a minimum, however, jurisdictions should adopt the following priority recommendations for the Learner Stage:

- ❑ A minimum duration of at least 12 months.
- ❑ A mandatory requirement for certified supervised practice of at least 50 hours.
- ❑ Eliminate the “time discount” for driver education.

## Intermediate Stage

The best practices for the intermediate stage are described briefly as follows.



- ❑ **Minimum entry age.** The minimum entry age should be 17.
- ❑ **Entry requirements.** Performance-based, “entry” test(s), including a road test, and testing in hazard perception should be used to ensure the novice has achieved the minimum standards of safe driving and serve as incentives for them to acquire the skills and experience needed to pass these tests.
- ❑ **Minimum duration.** This stage should last a minimum of 12 months and preferably 24 months, which is already the case in a few jurisdictions in Canada.
- ❑ **Maximum holding period.** The maximum holding period should be 24 months at which time the novice would be given a choice of remaining in the intermediate stage and re-doing the road test, or advancing to the full licence stage with appropriate testing.
- ❑ **BAC.** The zero BAC limit should continue in this stage. As well, when the novice is driving under supervision (e.g., during the restricted night hours), the supervisor should also have a low or zero BAC.
- ❑ **Night restriction.** Unsupervised driving would be permitted but not during riskier night hours – e.g., from 9:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. Driving to/from home and work or school or school events, and other approved purposes, could be exempt.
- ❑ **Passenger restriction.** During the first six to 12 months, for novice drivers under 20, teen passengers would not be allowed when the driver is unsupervised. After the first 6 to 12 months, teen passengers could be allowed during unsupervised driving. Immediate family members could be exempt from these restrictions.
- ❑ **“N” sign/plate.** The novice should be required to display an “N” sign/plate on/in the vehicle.
- ❑ **Driver education.** Integrating driver education and training could potentially enhance the effectiveness of GDL – e.g., basic skill-oriented course in the learner stage and a more advanced safety-oriented course in the intermediate stage. However, efforts should be made to improve the form and content of existing education and training programs because their safety benefits remain unproven.
- ❑ **Exit requirements.** Passing more advanced on-road and/or computerized exit tests that focus on higher-order skills such as hazard perception should be required to graduate to a full licence. In this regard, three jurisdictions in Canada already have an on-road exit test.
- ❑ **Minimum exit age.** The recommended minimum exit age is 19 and this is based on a minimum entry age into GDL of 16 and minimum durations of 12 months in the learner stage and 24 months in the intermediate stage.
- ❑ **Other features.** Similar to the learner stage, novices should be subject to penalties for breaching GDL conditions, a lower demit point threshold, licence suspensions/driving prohibitions followed by a return to the start of the stage, and/or an extension of the stage by the duration of the suspension/prohibition. As well, the novice should be required to maintain a crash- and violation-free record to graduate to a full licence.

Among the above best practices for the intermediate stage are the following priority recommendations that should be adopted, at a minimum, to enhance the potential safety benefits of GDL:

- ❑ No unsupervised night driving from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. (exemptions for home to work or school or school events, and other approved purposes).



- ❑ No teen passengers when driving unsupervised (for novice drivers under 20 years of age) during the first 6-months to 12-months (immediate family members exempt).

## Summary

Despite the well-documented success of GDL across North America, significant numbers of novice drivers, particularly young ones, who are protected by the program, still crash. This situation can be remedied in part by implementing the best practices highlighted in this report, and at a minimum, putting in place the priority recommendations.

Although some of the best practices are already in place in a few GDL programs in Canada, none include all the priority recommendations. The research reviewed in this report clearly suggests that implementing or enhancing GDL programs with these best practices can result in further safety benefits.



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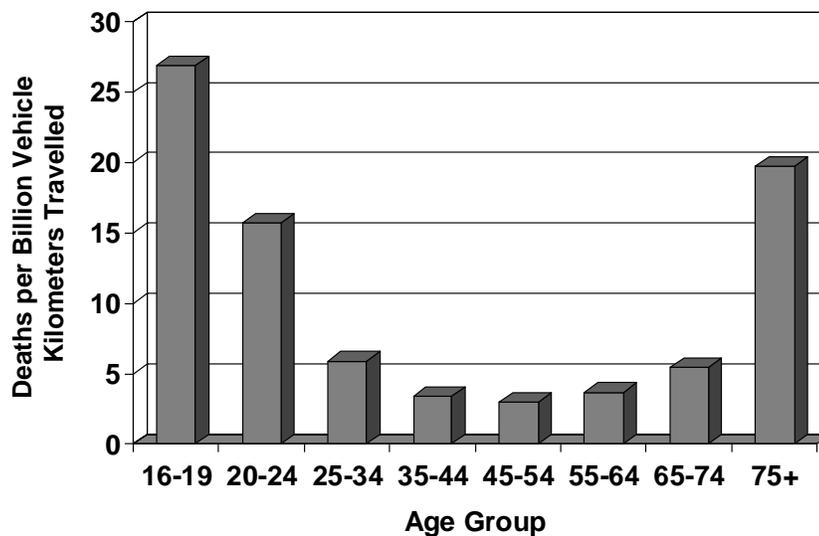


# Introduction —●

It has been known for decades that novice drivers, particularly young ones, have a higher risk of collision than older, more experienced drivers (e.g., Mayhew and Simpson 1990; Mayhew and Simpson 1995; Mayhew et al. 2004; Simpson and Mayhew 1999; Williams 2002). The elevated crash risk for young drivers is illustrated in Figure 1, which plots the fatality rate for various age groups of drivers in Canada, standardized by the amount of travel. Drivers age 16-19 years of age have a fatality rate that is four times that of drivers age 25-34, and nine times that of 45-54 year olds (a fatality rate of 27 per billion vehicle kilometres travelled for 16-19 year olds, compared to a rate of 6 for driver age 25-34, and 3 for those between 45-54 years of age).

Historically, a mainstay of prevention strategies to address this serious road safety and public health problem has been some form of driver licensing system that requires beginners to qualify for a licence before achieving the privilege of operating a motor vehicle on public highways. The “gold standard” that has emerged is graduated driver licensing (GDL), a system that has been widely adopted throughout Canada, the United States, and Australasia.

**Figure 1**  
**Driver Fatality Rates\* for Canada, 2001**



\*number of deaths per billion km of travel

## What is GDL and Why it Makes Sense

A fundamental purpose of graduated licensing is to provide new drivers with the opportunity to gain driving experience under conditions that minimize the exposure to risk. This premise was explicitly recognized over 25 years ago in a paper from the Traffic Injury Research Foundation



(TIRF), “The Young Driver Paradox” (Warren and Simpson 1976). The authors argued that experience was critical to the development of driving skills because increases in experience result in decreases in the risk of collision (Mayhew and Simpson 1990; Mayhew and Simpson 1995). So, beginners need to drive as much as possible. Paradoxically, this exposes them to the risk of a collision. What is needed is a means for gaining experience while minimizing risk. This is a basic tenet of graduated licensing. Somewhat like an apprenticeship program, it is intended to ease the novice into the full range of traffic conditions. In this manner, graduated licensing provides a protective way for new drivers to gain experience. As experience and competency are gained, exposure to more demanding situations are phased in.

Graduated licensing also addresses age-related or lifestyle factors that give rise to the greater crash risk of young motorists, by minimizing the opportunities for them to engage in risky behaviours or encounter risky situations. For example, zero BAC provisions and limits on the number and/or age of passengers are designed to reduce the incidence of drinking and driving, which is particularly risky for youth, and to reduce opportunities for peer pressure.

## How GDL Works

As noted above, graduated licensing systems attempt to provide a more protective environment for novice drivers by lengthening the learning process and imposing a set of restrictions aimed at reducing their risk of collision.

To achieve this, most GDL programs are multi-staged, typically including an extended learner’s stage and an intermediate or novice stage before graduation to a full licence. The learner’s stage involves a period of supervised driving. This stage is viewed as critical and one that cannot be bypassed. Indeed, most graduated licensing systems stipulate that the learner’s licence must be held for a certain minimum period of time – typically several months or even a year.

Graduated licensing systems also impose a set of restrictions in both the learner and novice stages that relate to when they can drive, where they can drive, with whom, and how. These restrictions are intended to address conditions and circumstances known to put novice drivers at risk. They include, for example, restrictions from operating on certain high-speed highways, being accompanied by a licensed adult at all times, driving during daylight hours only, and prohibiting driving after drinking any alcohol. Ideally, these restrictions should be removed gradually and systematically, so that the novice enters the driving task and earns the privilege of full unrestricted driving in a step-by-step, progressive manner.

Graduated licensing programs also usually include a penalty structure that imposes sanctions at a lower threshold than what applies to fully licensed drivers. The threat of punishment or its application is assumed to deter unsafe driving or other violations and to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the graduated licence. One of the more popular sanctions has been to extend the graduated licensing period, or move the driver back in the system, basically withholding full driving privileges for a longer period of time.



## How GDL has Evolved

Graduated licensing is certainly not new. It was first formally described in the early 1970s in the United States and a model system developed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) in 1977 (Croke and Wilson 1977). This model was never adopted by any of the states at that time, although both Maryland and California introduced elements of it.

For the next two decades, from the late 1970s to the mid-1990s, there was virtually no progress on the legislative front in Canada or the United States, although many agencies continued to promote the concept vigorously. However, more tangible progress was occurring elsewhere. It is now generally agreed that the first truly graduated licensing system was introduced in New Zealand in August of 1987. This 3-stage program applied to all drivers between the ages of 15 and 25, inclusive, and all motorcycle operators, regardless of age.

This development was much heralded in North America and cited extensively as a legislative initiative to emulate. Of equal importance was the commitment by New Zealand officials to evaluate the program's effectiveness – an outcome anxiously anticipated by observers in North America.

At about the same time, a keen interest in graduated licensing also emerged in Australia, at least at the Federal level. Indeed, in a development that paralleled what happened in the United States two decades before, the Australian Federal Office of Road Safety designed a model program for discussion based on the pioneering work of Waller (1974, 1975) and others (e.g., Coppin 1977; Croke and Wilson 1977). And, again echoing of what happened in the United States, the comprehensive 4-stage Australian model (Boughton et al. 1987), strongly recommended by the Australian Federal Office of Road Safety, was not implemented.

Although several Australian states did adopt some of the recommended components in the model, none of them conformed adequately to the concept to be called graduated licensing (Haworth 1994), and even the most comprehensive system, introduced in the state of Victoria, was described as a weak version of graduated licensing, at best (Mayhew 1996). However, again paralleling the slow evolution of graduated licensing that took place in North America, more recent initiatives in Australia demonstrate considerable progress. For example, a 3-stage graduated licensing system was introduced in New South Wales in July 2000.

Back in North America, as noted previously, the developments in the late 80s in Australia and New Zealand, in particular, were watched with interest and enthusiasm as events that might rekindle or even ignite interest in graduated licensing.

In Canada, TIRF had, through a variety of forums, continued since the mid-1970s to underscore the serious problem of road crashes involving young drivers and had emphasized the potential benefits of graduated licensing in addressing this problem. In 1985, an international symposium, organized by TIRF, "Young Driver Accidents: In Search of Solutions", strongly endorsed the



concept of graduated licensing (Mayhew et al. 1985). Other workshops and symposium that followed, such as the symposium TIRF convened on “Novice Drivers” in Halifax in 1990, funded by the Insurance Bureau of Canada, carried a similar message.

An important landmark in the history of graduated licensing occurred in Canada in 1990, which influenced one aspect of how the program was structured, and distinguished it from the approach taken in the United States. A unique and highly influential TIRF study, funded by the Insurance Bureau of Canada, was published (Mayhew and Simpson 1990). A key finding in that comprehensive report was that increases in experience (defined in terms of years licensed) were associated with decreases in collision rates, even among older drivers. For example, newly licensed 30-year-old drivers had crash rates considerably higher than those of 30 year olds with several years of experience.

Given that the population of licensed drivers was changing in Canada – many new drivers were not young – the findings from the TIRF study dramatically shifted the focus of graduated licensing away from an exclusive application to young drivers to any new driver, regardless of their age. To reflect this change in perspective, much of the subsequent research from TIRF and others used the phrase “new to the road” to signify that all beginners were at increased risk, not just young ones. Of course, young beginning drivers were at substantially greater risk than older beginners because of the added impact of age-related factors, but it was clear that graduated licensing was needed for all new drivers. A few years later, Simpson and Mayhew (1992) replicated the results of the earlier study.

As testimony to the impact of this research, all the graduated licensing programs in Canada apply to new drivers, regardless of their age. This has, however, not been the norm in the United States, where graduated licensing has been viewed as a countermeasure for young beginners only (the exceptions to this are New Jersey and Maryland). It is important, however, that this difference be viewed in context because it is really the only fundamental distinction that can be drawn between them. Moreover, there is no disagreement that graduated licensing should be applied to older new drivers if warranted by the age distribution in the population of newly licensed drivers.

By the early 1990s in Canada, graduated licensing was being actively and aggressively promoted by a diversity of agencies and individuals, both inside government – laying the empirical foundation and making the case to politicians – and outside of government – creating a receptive public climate for change. Many have taken credit for its eventual introduction but it is difficult and perhaps inappropriate to assign credit to any one particular individual or agency.

The important point is that graduated licensing did finally emerge in Canada. In April 1994, the Ministry of Transportation for the province of Ontario introduced the first graduated licence system in Canada. Very shortly thereafter, in October of that year, the Province of Nova Scotia introduced a graduated licensing program. This was a watershed in the history of graduated licensing not only in Canada but also in North America. During the next five years, an additional



four provinces introduced graduated licensing and, of greater significance, 23 states in the United States introduced it, starting with the State of Florida on July 1, 1996.

Indeed, the public interest in graduated licensing reached such proportions that many states began to make rather minimal changes to their existing licensing programs, ostensibly to be able to say they had graduated licensing. This development was of some concern, particularly to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) that had played a dominant leadership role for years, not only in the research that provided the groundwork for graduated licensing but also in actively promoting its adoption in the United States. In response to this concern and to provide direction regarding best practices in graduated licensing, IIHS together with TIRF produced a report, "Graduated Licensing: A Blueprint for North America". This document has been updated several times and the most recent version (October 2004) can be found on the IIHS website (Williams and Mayhew 2004).

Some variability in the structure and content of graduated licensing programs is to be expected because of the social, economic, geographic and political diversity among various jurisdictions. At the same time, some "programs" that have been introduced are graduated licensing in name only, suggesting that future efforts to promote it must emphasize adherence to the fundamental risk-reduction and multi-stage principles on which the concept is based and, presumably, its effectiveness is hinged. This is an issue of central importance to this report, which is intended not only to describe current and planned GDL programs but also to provide empirical guidance to all jurisdictions regarding best practices.





# Purpose and Method —●

## Purpose

Recent years have witnessed a proliferation of graduated driver licensing (GDL) programs, which has been a mixed blessing. The wider adoption of graduated licensing has been a very positive development; at the same time the programs that have evolved are anything but homogeneous in structure or content. Future developments must emphasize the importance of building systems that embrace the fundamental principles on which graduated licensing is founded. To this end, the purpose of this report, funded by the Insurance Bureau of Canada, is to describe best practices in GDL, which can be used as a standard for the development of new programs in Canada and for enhancing the effectiveness of those already in place.

Accordingly, the report contains: a detailed description of GDL programs in Canada; a comparison of these programs to GDL programs elsewhere; a description of the safety benefits of GDL, including the features that have been shown to contribute to their safety effectiveness; and, based on these findings, a description of best practices regarding GDL.

## Method

Pertinent information has been obtained in three ways. Information on GDL programs in Canada was gathered by means of an electronic survey of key representatives in each Canadian province and territory. Information on GDL programs in the United States and elsewhere were obtained from contacts in those countries, published reports, and secondary sources – e.g., the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety website. Information on the effectiveness of GDL programs and their various features was obtained from a review of the published literature, much of which is contained in the TIRF specialized library.





# Graduated Licensing in Canada —●

Since 1994, the following 12 jurisdictions in Canada have implemented some version of graduated licensing for novice drivers of passenger vehicles – Ontario (April 1994), Nova Scotia (October 1994), New Brunswick (January 1996), Quebec (July 1997), British Columbia (August 1998), Newfoundland (January 1999), Prince Edward Island (2000), the Yukon (September 2000), Manitoba (2003), Alberta (2003), the Northwest Territories (2005) and Saskatchewan (2005). Nunavut is also considering GDL.

The detailed features of each GDL program are described in Appendix 1 and then summarized in Table 1 for the learner stage, and Table 2 for the intermediate stage. Although Nunavut does not currently have a GDL program information is provided on their novice licensing system.

As can be seen, there is considerable variation across jurisdictions, although there are similarities. All jurisdictions, with the exceptions mentioned above, have adopted multi-phased graduated licensing comprised of a learner's stage and an intermediate stage. The only other exceptions are Saskatchewan and Manitoba. In Saskatchewan, the GDL program includes two intermediate stages, Novice 1 and Novice 2, before graduation to a full experienced driver's license. In Manitoba, restrictions are also included in the first year of the full licence stage. The features of each of these stages are summarized below.

## Level 1: Learner stage

**Entry age.** The most common age for entry into the GDL program is 16 but it is lower in several jurisdictions – 14 in Alberta, 15 in the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut. The entry age is 15 in Saskatchewan and 15.5 in Manitoba and Prince Edward Island if the beginner is enrolled in a driver education program.

**Entry tests.** In all jurisdictions, some form of testing is required to qualify for a learner's licence and this includes tests for knowledge and vision.

**Parental consent.** In all jurisdictions, with the exception of the Northwest Territories and Ontario, parental consent is also required for persons under the age of 18 or 19 to obtain a learner's licence.

**Minimum duration.** The minimum time that a learner's licence must be held ranges from 6 months to 12 months. Despite this variability, it is important to note that this greatly exceeds the length of time a learner's licence could be held before GDL was introduced. In six



**Table 1**  
**Key Features of the Learner Stage**

<b>Component</b>	<b>BC</b>	<b>AB</b>	<b>SK</b>	<b>MB</b>	<b>ON</b>	<b>QC</b>	<b>NL</b>	<b>NB</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>PEI</b>	<b>YK</b>	<b>NWT</b>	<b>NU</b>
Effective Date	1998	2003	2005 <sup>1</sup>	2003	1994	1997	1999	1996	1994	2000 <sup>1</sup>	2000	2005 <sup>1</sup>	N/A*
Entry Age	16	14	16 <sup>2</sup>	16 <sup>3</sup>	16	16	16	16	16	16 <sup>3</sup>	15	15	15
Entry Tests:													
Vision	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Knowledge	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>4</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Parental Consent:													
Age applied	Yes under 19	Yes under 18	Yes under 18	Yes under 18	No N/A	Yes under 18	Yes under 19	Yes under 18	Yes under 18	Yes under 18	Yes under 18	No N/A	N/S N/S
Minimum Duration:													
Without Driver Ed	12 mo	12 mo	9 mo	9 mo	12 mo	12 mo	12 mo	12 mo	6 mo	6 mo	6 mo	12 months	4 weeks
With Driver Ed	9 mo	N/A	9 mo	N/A	8 mo	8 mo	8 mo	4 mo	3 mo	6 mo	N/A	N/A	N/A
Maximum Duration	2 years	None	None	None <sup>5</sup>	5 years <sup>6</sup>	None	2 years	None	1 year	1 year	None	None	N/S
Supervisor:													
Age	25 or over	18 or over	N/S*	N/S	N/S	N/S	N/S	N/S	N/S	N/S	N/S	N/S	N/S
License type	Class 1-5	Fully licensed	Class 5 + <sup>7</sup>	Fully licensed	Fully licensed	Fully licensed	Class 5	Fully licensed	Fully licensed	Same vehicle <sup>7</sup>	Same vehicle <sup>7</sup>	Class 5 <sup>7</sup>	N/S
Time licensed	N/S	N/S	1 year <sup>8</sup>	3 years	4 years	2 years	4 years	N/S	N/S	4 years	2 years <sup>8</sup>	2 years	N/S
BAC level	N/S	N/S	<.04	<.05	<.05	<=.08	<.05	N/S	N/S	<.08	N/S	N/S	N/S
Minimum Driving	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	50 hours <sup>9</sup>	None	None
Driver Education:													
Voluntary	Yes	Yes	No <sup>10</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>11</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes
BAC Level	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	N/S
Night Restrictions	12am - 5am	12am - 5am	None	None	12am - 5am	None	12am - 5am	None	None	None	12am - 5am	11pm-6am	None



## Learner Stage (Cont.)

Component	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NL	NB	NS	PEI	YK	NWT	NU
Passenger Restrictions:													
Number	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 <sup>13</sup>	1	1	1 <sup>14</sup>	2	1	N/A
Incl. supervisor	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
Limit to # seatbelts	N/A	Yes	Yes <sup>12</sup>	Yes <sup>12</sup>	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
L Sign/Plate	Mandatory	None	None	None	None	None	Mandatory	None	None	None	Mandatory	None	None
Road Restriction	None	None	None	Yes <sup>15</sup>	Yes <sup>16</sup>	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None
Penalties For GDL Violations	Yes <sup>17</sup>	Yes <sup>18</sup>	Yes <sup>18</sup>	Yes	Yes <sup>19</sup>	Yes <sup>20</sup>	Yes <sup>21</sup>	Yes <sup>19</sup>	Yes	Yes <sup>18</sup>	Yes <sup>22</sup>	Yes <sup>23</sup>	None
Lower Demerit Point Threshold	2-6 instead of 15-19	8 instead of 15	Yes <sup>24</sup>	Yes <sup>24</sup>	9 instead of 15	4 instead of 15	6 instead of 12	Yes <sup>25</sup>	Yes <sup>26</sup>	6 instead of 12	7 instead of 15	Yes <sup>25</sup>	None
Suspensions/Prohibitions	Yes <sup>27</sup>	Yes <sup>28</sup>	Yes <sup>28</sup>	Yes <sup>29</sup>	Yes <sup>30</sup>	Yes <sup>31</sup>	Yes <sup>32</sup>	Yes <sup>32</sup>	Yes <sup>33</sup>	Yes <sup>34</sup>	Yes <sup>35</sup>	Yes <sup>23</sup>	N/S
Start Stage Over/Extended Period	No	No	Yes <sup>36</sup>	No	No	No <sup>36</sup>	Yes <sup>37</sup>	Yes <sup>38</sup>	Yes <sup>39</sup>	Yes Admin.	Yes <sup>22</sup>	No <sup>36</sup>	N/A
Driver Improvement	None	Yes <sup>40</sup>	Yes <sup>41</sup>	Yes <sup>41</sup>	Yes <sup>42</sup>	Yes <sup>43</sup>	Yes <sup>44</sup>	None	Yes <sup>45</sup>	Yes <sup>46</sup>	None	None	None
Other Features	None	None	Yes <sup>47</sup>	Yes <sup>47</sup>	None	Yes <sup>48</sup>	Yes <sup>49</sup>	None	None	Yes <sup>50</sup>	Yes <sup>51</sup>	None	None
Minimum Exit Age	16 & 9 mo	16	16	16 & 3 mo	16 & 8 mo	16 & 8 mo	16 & 8 mo	16 & 4 mo	16 & 3 mo	16 with DE 16 & 6 mo without DE	16	16	16

\* N/A means not applicable and N/S means not specified.

- 1) SK and NWT have the most recently implemented GDL programs; PEI, in 2000, extended the learner period from 30 days to 180 days and, as early as 1980, implemented their "newly licensed" driver program with reduced demerit points for the first two years.
- 2) Fifteen if applicant is enrolled in a Driver Education Program.
- 3) Fifteen and a half (15.5) in MB and PEI if applicant is enrolled in a Driver Education Program.
- 4) Applicant must score 85%.
- 5) If license allowed to lapse for greater than 4 years, Learner must rewrite knowledge test.
- 6) Five year maximum for combined G1/G2 Graduated Licensing System.
- 7) Supervisor must have completed the GDL program (SK). Supervisor must be licensed to drive same class of vehicle that Learner is driving (PEI & NWT) or higher (YK). In NWT, driver must be fully licensed.
- 8) One year within the preceding 3 years in SK and 2 years immediately prior to teaching the Learner in YK. In SK, the supervisor cannot be a Novice 1 or 2 driver.
- 9) Ten hours in darkness and 10 different hours in winter conditions (parent/guardian/co-driver must sign Declaration of Completion).
- 10) If high school driver education, then 30 hours in-class and 6 hours in car. If commercial driver education, then 6 hours in-class and 6 hours in car.



- 11) Persons not enrolled in a driving course must take a 5 hour knowledge course for novices.
- 12) Between midnight and 5am, the only passengers allowed are immediate family members (SK). Limit of 1 passenger (supervisor) in front seat and up to number of working seatbelts in the back seat (MB).
- 13) Parents/guardians may be passengers if the driver is enrolled in driver education and is accompanied by a licensed instructor.
- 14) Family members may be passengers.
- 15) Not permitted to operate a Class 3 vehicle (farm truck) or off-road vehicle along or across highways.
- 16) Refrain from driving on "400-series" highways or other high-speed expressways unless accompanied by licensed driving instructor.
- 17) Minimum penalty for violation of any GDL restriction is \$109. Violation of the zero BAC level is an immediate 12 hour suspension and a 1 month driving prohibition for the first violation (1 year for repeat violations).
- 18) Fines and demerits for GDL Condition violations (AB, SK, & PEI). Thirty-day suspension for zero BAC violation (AB & SK).
- 19) In ON, 30-day suspension if peace officer writes a ticket for violation of license use conditions. In NB, 1 year suspension for zero BAC violation and, as a result, a return to the beginning of the stage. A loss of 3 points and a fine for no supervising driver or too many passengers.
- 20) For violating the zero BAC level, four demerit points are assigned and, as a result, there is a 3 month suspension.
- 21) For violating the zero BAC level, there is a 2 month suspension for the first occurrence, 4 months for the second, and 6 months for the third or subsequent occurrence.
- 22) If the Learner is convicted of breaking any conditions of their license or the license is suspended, cancelled, or disqualified, they must restart the Learner stage. When the license is reinstated, the Learner must still meet the time requirements but will not be eligible to do so for at least another 6 months.
- 23) Subject to 30 day suspension for violating the zero BAC level.
- 24) Earlier intervention than for experienced drivers (SK). Driver Improvement Action initiated at a lower threshold (MB).
- 25) In NB, start at 4 points and receive additional 2 points on the anniversary date of their first license, to a maximum of 10 points. In NWT, fewer demerit points are permitted.
- 26) Receive suspension at lower demerit points (4) than newly licensed drivers (6) and regular drivers (10).
- 27) Learner can be prohibited from driving for one month for receiving 4 penalty points. More points can result in longer prohibition.
- 28) Automatic 30 day suspension at 8 demerit points (AB). Drivers in any stage who are found at-fault for a collision or who receive convictions or suspensions, are placed in the GDL Improvement Program (SK).
- 29) Suspensions are issued through a hearing process.
- 30) Sixty day suspension at 9 demerit points.
- 31) Three month suspension following the accumulation of 4 demerit points.
- 32) In NL, following any suspension, Learner must pay \$100 reinstatement fee plus fines. In NB, 3 month suspension for loss of all points.
- 33) Four demerit points results in a 6 month suspension. Discretionary suspensions may be implemented by the Department upon review of a driving record.
- 34) One month suspension at 6 points.
- 35) Learner receives a one month suspension for the first time they accumulate 7 or more demerit points within one year and a 2 month suspension for the second time. An interview with the Registrar of Motor Vehicles is required for reinstatement.
- 36) In SK, non-renewals, refusals, and suspensions will increase the minimum duration of 9 months in this stage. In QC, the Learner's license is valid following the suspension but the length of the period of validity is extended by 3 months. In NWT, time spent suspended will have to be made up before moving to the next stage.
- 37) Credit is given for the driving course.
- 38) If suspended for 3 months or greater, the suspension is followed by a return to the beginning of the GDL period with no credit given for previously passed tests or driver training course.
- 39) For any suspension.
- 40) Attend Transportation Safety Board for interview as required by driving record. Voluntary Defensive Driving Course following 3 demerit reduction. If charged with impaired driving, must complete one of two courses.
- 41) In SK, a warning letter is sent to the driver if the first incident (conviction) has an assigned rating of 2 points or fewer. If the first incident (conviction, at-fault collision, suspension) has an assigned rating of 3 to 6 points, the driver will be required to attend an education seminar. Each incident after that will result in the driver being required to attend further education courses followed by administrative suspensions: Defensive Driving Course, Driver Improvement Training, 30-day, 90-day, and 180-day suspensions, interview and review. In MB, Warning letter for 1st intervention, driver course for 2nd, and driver hearing for 3rd.
- 42) Warning letter sent at 2 or more demerit points and 6 demerit points may require an interview.
- 43) Promotional campaigns and educational programs.
- 44) If suspended for demerit points, Learner must complete a Responsible Driver's Workshop (8 hour course) prior to reinstatement. For a second BAC violation, Learner must complete a 4 hour alcohol education program and, for a third or subsequent occurrence, must attend an alcohol rehabilitation program (up to 6 months).
- 45) Learner must complete a vision, signs, rules of the road, and driving test before restoration of license. Two demerit points results in an interview
- 46) Warning letter issued at 3, 4, or 5 points.
- 47) Not permitted to be a supervising driver and cannot obtain a commercial driver's licence or school bus endorsement (SK). Not permitted to take instruction in Class 1-4 or tow vehicles (MB).
- 48) Can only drive Class 5 vehicles.
- 49) No upgrade to commercial class vehicles.
- 50) If taking a driving course and knowledge and road test conducted at the school, a supplementary test may be requested.
- 51) May drive a vehicle that is equipped to carry no more than 7 persons, including the driver, and has a registered gross vehicle weight not exceeding 4000 kg.



jurisdictions, this minimum length of time in the learners stage can be reduced with successful completion of an approved driver education program – from 12 months to 9 months in British Columbia; from 12 months to 8 months in Ontario, Newfoundland and Quebec; from 12 to 4 months in New Brunswick; and from six months to three months in Nova Scotia.

**Maximum duration.** The maximum length of time a learner’s licence can be held varies from no maximum duration in seven jurisdictions to five years in Ontario. In Manitoba, if the licence lapses for more than four years, the learner must rewrite the knowledge test.

**Supervision.** All jurisdictions require supervised driving at all times by a fully licensed driver. In British Columbia, the supervisor must be age 25 or older; in Alberta, the supervisor must be age 18 or older. Several jurisdictions also require the supervisor to have been licensed for a certain number of years, ranging from 1 year in Saskatchewan to 4 years in Ontario, Newfoundland, and Prince Edward Island. In Manitoba, Ontario, and Newfoundland, the supervisor is also subject to a low BAC requirement of below .05; in Quebec, and Prince Edward Island the supervisor’s BAC must be below .08. In Saskatchewan, the BAC requirement is below .04.

**Minimum driving required.** Only one jurisdiction – the Yukon – requires parents or supervisors to certify that a certain number of hours have been driven under supervision. The requirement is a minimum of 50 hours, including 10 hours in darkness and 10 different hours in winter conditions.

**Driver education.** In all jurisdictions, with the exception of Saskatchewan, driver education is voluntary – i.e., novices are not required to take it to graduate to an intermediate licence. However, as noted above, several jurisdictions include an implicit incentive to take driver education since its completion reduces the length of time the novice must hold a learner’s licence. In Saskatchewan, learners must take high school driver education or six hours in-class and six hours in car of commercial driver education. In Prince Edward Island, although driver education is not a licence requirement, persons not enrolled in driver education must take a five-hour knowledge course for novices.

**Alcohol use.** All GDL jurisdictions restrict learners from driving after drinking – a zero BAC.

**Night driving.** Several jurisdictions restrict learners from driving at night with a midnight to 5 a.m. restriction – British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Newfoundland, and the Yukon. In the Northwest Territories, the learner cannot drive between the hours of 11 p.m. and 6 a.m.

**Passenger restrictions.** In Newfoundland, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, only the supervisor is allowed in the learner’s vehicle. Prince Edward Island also only allows one passenger, the supervisor, in the vehicle, unless they are family members. British Columbia and



the Yukon allow one passenger in addition to the supervisor. In a few jurisdictions, the number of passengers is limited to the number of seatbelts in the vehicle.

**Special plates.** Three jurisdictions require learners to display an “L” sign or plate at all times during practice driving – British Columbia, Newfoundland and the Yukon.

**Road restrictions.** In Ontario, learners are restricted from driving on expressways and certain highways with high-posted speeds.

**Penalties for GDL violations.** In all jurisdictions penalties are applied for violating the conditions of GDL and these include hearings, fines, demerit points, license suspensions, and driving prohibitions.

**Lower demerit point threshold.** All jurisdictions have a lower demerit point threshold than for fully licensed drivers. This means that driver improvement actions, such as a license suspension, are taken at a lower number of demerit points, which are received for traffic violation.

**Suspensions/Prohibitions.** All jurisdictions suspend the licence or prohibit driving of learners who violate GDL requirements and accumulate a certain number of demerit points. The triggers for, and length of, the suspension vary across jurisdictions.

**Start stage over/Extend stage.** In five jurisdictions, convictions for breaches of the GDL conditions and/or a license suspension means the beginner must restart the learner stage. In Quebec, following the reinstatement of the licence, the length of the learner period is extended by 3 months. In Saskatchewan, non-renewals, refusals, and suspensions increase the minimum duration on the learner stage.

**Driver improvement.** In the majority of jurisdictions, demerit points trigger escalating driver improvement actions that may include specialized courses, warning letters, and an interview. In Nova Scotia, before restoration of the licence, the learner must complete a vision, signs, rules of the road, and a driving test.

**Other features.** Six jurisdictions identified other features of their learner stage which mostly relate to the type of vehicle that can be operated – e.g., passenger vehicle and no upgrade to a commercial vehicle.

**Minimum exit age.** The minimum exit age ranges from 16 in four jurisdictions to 16 years, nine months in British Columbia.



## Level 2: Intermediate Stage

Nunavut does not currently have a GDL program so there is no intermediate stage before full licensing.

**Entry age.** In Canada, transition from the learner to the intermediate stage is time-based not age-based – i.e., the learner licence must be held for a minimum period of time, such as 6 months. This time period establishes the minimum age at which a learner can obtain an intermediate licence. In this regard, the minimum entry age ranges from 16 years to 16 years and nine months.

**Entry test.** In all jurisdictions, the novice must successfully pass a road test to obtain an intermediate licence, or, in the case of Nunavut, a full licence.

**Parental consent.** In most jurisdictions, parental consent is not required presumably because it was provided when the beginner applied for a learner's licence.

**Minimum duration.** The mandatory holding period ranges from 12 months to 24 months. In Quebec, the minimum holding period is 24 months or until age 25. In New Brunswick, it is 12 months or 20 months if the novice has successfully completed a driver training course and enters level 2 after 4 months (rather than after 12 months).

**Maximum duration.** The maximum holding period ranges from no maximum duration to 5 years.

**BAC level.** All jurisdictions apply a zero BAC limit in the intermediate stage.

**Night driving.** In Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and the Yukon, unsupervised driving at night is prohibited from midnight to 5 a.m. Two of these jurisdictions have an exemption for work purposes.

**Passenger restriction.** Eight jurisdictions have some form of passenger restriction. In British Columbia, only one passenger is allowed unless a supervisor accompanies the novice driver. In Saskatchewan, only one passenger, who is not an immediate family member, is allowed; in Prince Edward Island, the limit is three passengers during the first year. In the Yukon, the limit is no more than one passenger who is under 13 years old or a combination of passengers that include more than one passenger who is under 13 years old and more than one passenger who is over 12 but under 20 years old unless there is a passenger who is at least 20 years old and whose ability to supervise the younger passengers is not impaired by alcohol or drugs. In Nova Scotia and the Northwest Territories, there is a limit of one passenger in the front seat and passengers up to the number of working seatbelts in the back of the vehicle. In Manitoba, the passenger restrictions are related to the time of day: from 5 a.m. to midnight, only one passenger is allowed in the front seat and up to the number of functioning seat belts in the



**Table 2**

**Key Features of the Intermediate Stage**

<b>Component</b>	<b>BC</b>	<b>AB</b>	<b>SK</b>	<b>MB</b>	<b>ON</b>	<b>QC</b>	<b>NL</b>	<b>NB</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>PEI</b>	<b>YK</b>	<b>NWT</b>	<b>NU</b>
Minimum Entry Age	16 & 9 mo	16	16	16 & 3 mo	16 & 8 mo	16 & 8 mo	16 & 8 mo	16 & 4 mo	16 & 3 mo	16	16	16	N/A
Entry Requirements: Road test	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>1</sup>
Parental Consent: Age applied	No N/A	No N/A	No N/A	No N/A	No N/A	Yes under 18	No N/A	No N/A	No N/A	Yes under 18	Yes under 18	No N/A	N/A N/A
Minimum Duration:	24 mo	24 mo	18 mo <sup>2</sup>	15 mo	12 mo	24 mo <sup>2</sup>	12 mo	12 mo <sup>3</sup>	24 mo	24 mo	18 mo	12 mo	N/A
Maximum Duration	5 years	None	None	None	5 years <sup>4</sup>	24 mo <sup>2</sup>	12 mo <sup>5</sup>	20 mo	5 years	N/A	N/A	None	N/A
BAC Level	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	N/A
Night Restrictions	None	None	None	None	None	None	12am - 5am <sup>6</sup>	None	12am - 5am <sup>6</sup>	None	12am - 5am <sup>6</sup>	None	N/A
Passenger Restrictions: Number Limit to # seatbelts	1 <sup>7</sup> N/A	N/A Yes	1 <sup>7</sup> Yes <sup>8</sup>	Yes <sup>8</sup> Yes <sup>8</sup>	Yes <sup>9</sup> Yes <sup>9</sup>	N/A N/A	N/A Yes	N/A N/A	Yes <sup>8</sup> Yes <sup>8</sup>	1st yr-3 pass 2nd year	Yes <sup>10</sup> Yes	Yes <sup>8</sup> Yes <sup>8</sup>	N/A N/A
N Sign/Plate	Mandatory	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	N/A
Road Restriction	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	N/A
Penalties for GDL Violations	Yes <sup>11</sup>	Yes <sup>12</sup>	Yes <sup>12</sup>	Yes	Yes <sup>13</sup>	Yes <sup>14</sup>	Yes <sup>15</sup>	Yes <sup>13</sup>	Yes	Yes <sup>13</sup>	Yes <sup>16</sup>	Yes <sup>14</sup>	N/A
Lower Demerit Point Threshold	2-6 instead of 15-19	8 instead of 15	Yes <sup>17</sup>	Yes <sup>18</sup>	9 instead of 15	4 instead of 15	6 instead of 12	Yes <sup>19</sup>	Yes <sup>20</sup>	1st yr - 6 instead of 12 2nd yr - 9 instead of 12	7 instead of 15	Yes <sup>17</sup>	N/A



## Intermediate Stage (Cont.)

Component	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NL	NB	NS	PEI	YK	NWT	NU
Suspensions/ Prohibitions	Yes <sup>21</sup>	Yes <sup>22</sup>	Yes <sup>23</sup>	Yes <sup>24</sup>	Yes <sup>25</sup>	Yes <sup>26</sup>	Yes <sup>27</sup>	Yes <sup>27</sup>	Yes <sup>28</sup>	Yes <sup>28</sup>	Yes <sup>29</sup>	Yes <sup>14</sup>	N/A
Start Stage Over/ Extend Stage	Yes	No	No <sup>30</sup>	No	No	No <sup>31</sup>	Yes	Yes <sup>32</sup>	Yes	Yes Admin.	Yes <sup>16</sup>	No <sup>30</sup>	N/A
Driver Improvement	None	Yes <sup>33</sup>	Yes <sup>34</sup>	Yes <sup>35</sup>	Yes <sup>36</sup>	Yes <sup>37</sup>	Yes <sup>38</sup>	None	Yes <sup>39</sup>	Yes <sup>39</sup>	None	None	N/A
Other Features	None	Yes <sup>40</sup>	Yes <sup>41</sup>	Yes <sup>41</sup>	None	None	Yes <sup>40</sup>	None	Yes <sup>40</sup>	None	Yes <sup>42</sup>	None	N/A
Exit Requirements:													
Road test	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No <sup>5</sup>	No	No	N/A	No	No	Yes <sup>1</sup>
Course	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	N/A	No	No	N/A
Minimum Exit Age	18 & 9 mo	18	17 & 6 mo <sup>43</sup>	17 & 6 mo <sup>44</sup>	17 & 8 mo	18 & 8 mo	17 & 8 mo	18	18 & 3 mo	18	17 & 6 mo	17	N/A

\* N/A means not applicable.

- 1) NU (no GDL) requires Learner to complete a road test for full license.
- 2) In SK, minimum of 6 months in Novice 1 and 12 months in Novice 2. In QC, 24 months or until age 25, whichever comes first.
- 3) Twenty months if the person has successfully completed a driver training course and enters Level 2 after 4 months.
- 4) Five year maximum for combined G1/G2 Graduated Licensing System.
- 5) Driver automatically upgrades to a full Class 5 license after 12 months of suspension-free driving.
- 6) Driver must be accompanied by a licensed experienced driver (4 years of experience required in NL) or a qualified co-driver. Night restriction exemption for work purposes available in NL and NS.
- 7) Unless accompanied by a supervisor, 25 years or older, with a valid Class 1-5 license (immediate family allowed with no supervisor) (BC). In SK, only one passenger, who is not an immediate family member, is allowed. All other passengers must be immediate family.
- 8) In SK, for Novice 1, one passenger only who is not an immediate family member; other passengers must be immediate family members and are limited to the number of seatbelts. For Novice 2, passengers are limited to the number of seatbelts. In NS, limit of one passenger in the front seat and up to the number of working seatbelts in the back seat; In MB, similar passenger restriction to NS but only from 5 a.m. to midnight and then from midnight to 5 a.m. either one passenger, or a qualified supervising driver in the front seat and up to the number of functioning seatbelts in the back seat. In NWT, only one passenger permitted in front seat.
- 9) Effective September 1, 2005, drivers 19 and under are prohibited from carrying more than one passenger aged 19 and under during the driver's first six months in G2, and more than three passengers aged 19 and under for the duration of the driver's time in G2 or until the driver turns 20. The restriction applies between midnight and 5 am and would be waived if the G2 driver is accompanied by a driver who has been fully licensed for at least four years. Immediate family members are exempt.
- 10) No more than one passenger who is under 13 years old. No combination of passengers that includes more than one passenger under 13 years old and more than one passenger who is over 12 but under 20 years old unless there is a passenger in the vehicle who is at least 20 years old and whose ability to supervise the younger passengers is not impaired by alcohol or drugs. No passengers in a box of a truck being operated by a novice driver.



- 11) Minimum penalty for violation of any GDL restriction is \$109. Violation of the zero BAC level is an immediate 12 hour suspension and a 1 month driving prohibition for the first violation (1 year for repeat violations).
- 12) In AB, fines and demerits for GDL condition violations. Thirty day suspension for zero BAC level violation. In SK, 30-day licence suspension for first BAC offence and requirement to take a DWI course in 90 days. Ninety-day suspension for subsequent offences and mandatory alcohol addiciton screening and completion of a prescribed education or recovery program prior to licence reinstatement.
- 13) In ON, 30-day license suspension for violating the conditions set out for novice drivers. In NB, 1 year suspension for a zero BAC violation and, as a result, a return to the beginning of the stage. In PEI, 90 day suspension for alcohol violation, lower demerit point thresholds, and 1 year probation after any GDL suspension.
- 14) For violating the zero BAC level, in QC, four demerit points are assigned and, as a result, there is a 3 month suspension. In NWT, subject to 30-day suspension.
- 15) For violating the zero BAC level, there is a 2 month suspension for the first occurrence, 4 months for the second, and 6 months for the third or subsequent occurrence.
- 16) If the driver is convicted of breaking any conditions of their license or the license is suspended, cancelled, or disqualified, they must restart the Novice stage. When the license is reinstated, the driver must still meet the time requirements but will not be eligible to do so for at least another 18 months.
- 17) In SK, earlier intervention than for experienced drivers. In NWT, fewer demerit points are permitted.
- 18) Driver Improvement Action initiated at a lower threshold.
- 19) When a person is first licensed, they start at 4 points and receive additional 2 points on the anniversary date of their first license, to a maximum of 10 points.
- 20) Suspension is implemented at 6 demerit points rather than 10.
- 21) Novice can be prohibited from driving for one month for receiving 4 penalty points. More points can result in longer prohibition.
- 22) Last year of this phase must be suspension free.
- 23) Drivers in any stage who are found at-fault for a collision or who receive convictions or suspensions, will be placed in the GDL Improvement Program.
- 24) Suspensions are issued through a hearing process.
- 25) Sixty day suspension at 9 demerit points.
- 26) Three month suspension following the accumulation of 4 demerit points.
- 27) In NL, following any suspension, driver must pay \$100 reinstatement fee plus fines. In NB, 3 month suspension for loss of all points.
- 28) Suspension implemented at 6 demerit points. Discretionary suspensions may be implemented by the Department upon review of a driving record.
- 29) Driver receives a one month suspension for the first time they accumulate 7 or more demerit points within one year and a 2 month suspension for the second time. An interview with the Registrar of Motor Vehicles is required for reinstatement.
- 30) In SK, interruptions such as non-renewals, refusals, and suspensions will increase the minimum duration of 6 months in this stage. In NWT, time spent suspended will have to be made up before moving on to the next stage.
- 31) The probationary license is valid following the suspension but the length of the period of validity is extended by 3 months.
- 32) If suspended for 3 months or greater, the suspension is followed by a return to the beginning of the GDL period with no credit given for previously passed tests or driver training course.
- 33) Attend Transportation Safety Board for interview as required by driving record. Voluntary Defensive Driving Course following 3 demerit reduction. If charged with impaired driving, must complete one of two courses.
- 34) A warning letter will be sent to the driver if the first incident (conviction) has an assigned rating of 2 points or fewer. If the first incident (conviction, at-fault collision, suspension) has an assigned rating of 3 to 6 points, the driver will be required to attend an education or safety seminar. Each incident thereafter will result in the driver being required to attend further education courses followed by administrative suspensions: Defensive Driving Course, Driver Improvement Training, 30-day, 90-day, 180-day suspensions, interview and review.
- 35) Warning letter for 1st intervention, driver course for 2nd, and driver hearing for 3rd.
- 36) Warning letter sent at 2 or more demerit points and 6 demerit points may require an interview.
- 37) Promotional campaigns and educational programs.
- 38) If suspended for demerit points, Learner must complete a Responsible Driver's Workshop (8 hour course) prior to reinstatement. For a second BAC violation, Learner must complete a 4 hour alcohol education program and, for a third or subsequent occurrence, must attend an alcohol rehabilitation program (up to 6 months).
- 39) Driver subject to Driver Improvement Action earlier than experienced drivers (NS & PEI). An interview is implemented at 4 demerit points (NS).
- 40) No upgrade to commercial class driver's license (AB and NL) or beyond a Class 5 license (NS). Cannot serve as an accompanying driver to a Learner (AB).
- 41) Cannot be a supervising driver and cannot obtain a commercial driver's licence or school bus endorsement (SK). May take instruction for Class 1-4 licenses if at least 18 and meet medical standards (MB).
- 42) May drive a vehicle that is equipped to carry no more than 9 persons, including the driver, and has a registered gross vehicle weight not exceeding 4000 kg.
- 43) The Novice 1 stage, minimum duration of 6 months, is followed by a Novice 2 stage, minimum duration of 12 months (excluding interruptions and the driver must be 12 months at-fault collisions, convictions, and suspensions free). The Novice 2 stage is identical to Novice 1 in its restrictions except that the number of passengers is only limited to the number of seatbelts and the minimum exit age for Novice 1 and Novice 2 combined is 17 years and 6 months.
- 44) After the Novice stage, there are a few restrictions under the Class 5F license including: 1) zero BAC level for 12 months, 2) subject to driver improvement intervention at lower thresholds (warning letter for 1st intervention, driver course for 2nd, and driver hearing for 3rd), 3) may upgrade to a full Class 1-4 license if at least 18, meets medical standards, and passes appropriate tests, and 4) may supervise after 3 years in full stage.



back seat; and from midnight to 5 a.m. either one passenger, or a qualified supervising driver in the front seat and up to the number of functioning seatbelts in the back seat. The Ontario GDL program also applies passenger restrictions between midnight and 5 a.m.: drivers 19 and under are prohibited from carrying more than one passenger aged 19 and under during the driver's first 6 months, and more than three passengers aged 19 and under for the duration of the driver's time in this stage or until the driver turns 20; this restriction would be waived if the novice driver is accompanied by a driver who has been fully licensed for at least 4 years.

**N sign/Plate.** Only British Columbia requires novices to display an "N" sign or plate in their vehicle.

**Road restriction.** No jurisdiction prohibits driving on expressways or high-speed highways, which is a condition Ontario has in the learner stage.

**Penalties for GDL violations.** Similar to the learner stage, most jurisdictions have penalties associated with violating the conditions of the intermediate stage. These penalties mirror those that are in place for learners.

**Lower demerit point threshold.** All jurisdictions have a lower demerit point threshold than for fully licensed drivers. These are similar to those that apply in the learner stage. In Prince Edward Island, the threshold is 6 demerit points in the first year and 9 demerit points in the second year compared to 12 demerit points for a fully licensed driver.

**Suspensions/Prohibitions.** Like the learner stage, jurisdictions suspend the licence and/or prohibit the driving of traffic violators in this stage. In Alberta, the last year of this 24-month phase must be suspension-free.

**Start over/extend the stage.** In several jurisdictions, licence suspensions and/or interviews that are administered because of an unsatisfactory driving record may result in the stage being extended. For example, in Saskatchewan, interruptions such as non-renewals, refusals, and suspensions will increase the minimum duration on this stage. In a few jurisdictions, the suspension is followed by a return to the beginning of this stage.

**Driver improvement.** Driver improvement actions include courses, typically, in defensive driving, warning letters, and interviews. In Saskatchewan, at-fault collisions will result in driver improvement actions.

**Other features.** In several jurisdictions, novice drivers cannot upgrade to a commercial class driver's licence. In Alberta, the novice driver also cannot serve as an accompanying driver to a learner. However, this would also be the case in most other jurisdictions because the supervisor must be fully licensed.



**Exit requirements.** An advanced, on road, exit test is required to exit the intermediate stage in British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario. In Newfoundland, the novice driver is automatically upgraded to a full license after 12 months of suspension-free driving. In Saskatchewan, in the second novice driver stage, the driver must be free of at-fault collisions, convictions and suspensions, for a 12-month period.

**Minimum exit age.** The minimum exit age ranges from 17 years, 6 months in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and the Yukon to 18 years, 9 months in British Columbia. In Saskatchewan, the minimum exit age for the second novice driver stage is 17 years and 6 months. In Manitoba, following the novice stage, there are further conditions, including a zero BAC for 12 months, and driver improvement actions at lower demerit point thresholds.

## Recent or Proposed Changes to GDL in Canada

As described in detail in previous sections, the GDL programs in Canada vary in form and content rather substantially. Some programs have numerous restrictions; others are graduated licensing more in name than substance. There has been some concern that as comprehensive a program as possible should be implemented at the outset because subsequent amendments to enhance the program are unlikely. This concern, however, does not appear to be warranted because several jurisdictions have already made changes to their program or have plans or proposals to do so.

- British Columbia implemented enhancements to their GDL program in the fall of 2003 which included: increasing the length of the learner period from six months (three months with driver education) to 12 months (nine months with driver education); and a restriction on the number of passengers in the intermediate stage. They have no further changes planned. However, following the evaluation by Wiggins (2004), The Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) has been working with road safety stakeholders and the driver training industry in an attempt to implement their recommendations in order to increase the safety of new drivers. One of the recommendations from the report was to eliminate the time discount for driver education.
- Ontario passed Bill 73, *An Act to Enhance the Safety of Children and Youth on Ontario's Roads*, in December 2004 and a new GDL restriction came into effect on September 1, 2005. The changes to the GDL program included a passenger restriction whereby drivers, 19 or under, would be prohibited from carrying more than one passenger, aged 19 or under, during the driver's first six months in the intermediate stage, and prohibited from carrying more than three passengers aged 19 or under for the duration of the driver's time in this stage, or until the driver turns 20. The restriction applies between midnight and 5 a.m. and would be waived if the novice driver is accompanied by a driver who has been fully licensed for at least four years. Immediate family members would be exempt.
- The Northwest Territories implemented a GDL program on August 1, 2005. The learner stage is a minimum of 12 months and prohibits the learner from having any other passengers other than the supervisor and from driving between the hours of 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. The 12 months intermediate stage requires the novice to be 16 years of age, and allows only one passenger in the front seat. The novice must be suspension-free over this mandatory period.
- Saskatchewan implemented a 3-stage GDL program on September 1, 2005. As described in the previous sections, the Learner stage has a mandatory 9 month duration and requires the



new driver to: be 16 (15 if enrolled in a high school driver education program); pass a written test; have an experienced supervisory driver in the front seat at all times; and have a zero BAC, which is the case for all stages. Passengers are limited to the number of working seatbelts and must be family members between the hours of midnight and 5 a.m. Driver education/training is mandatory. The Novice 1 stage is for 6 months and the entry requirements include the new driver being 16 and passing a road test. Only one passenger, who is not a family member, is allowed and all other passengers must be family members and are limited to the number of working seatbelts. Novice 2 has a 12 month duration that must be free of at-fault collisions, convictions, and suspensions. The number of passengers is limited to the number of working seatbelts.

- In New Brunswick, the Minister of Public Safety introduced legislation in December 2004 which would amend the provisions of their GDL program. The bill received first and second reading and has been referred to the Committee of the Whole House. If passed, the bill would prohibit novice drivers from driving between the hours of midnight and 5 a.m., unless accompanied by a fully licensed driver. The legislation would also limit the number of passengers who can accompany a novice driver – restricted to the number of working seat belts in the vehicle with only one passenger permitted to sit in the front seat.
- Nova Scotia is currently discussing a requirement to complete an exit course in the Class 7 Learner stage and an L sign requirement in the Learner stage when training in a private vehicle.
- Both Quebec and the Yukon are conducting a review/evaluation of their GDL program. In the Yukon, new drivers, parents and others have been encouraged to provide their views on the GDL program, which has been in place since 2000.
- In Nunavut, a Legislative Proposal is being submitted to review their current legislation pertaining to licensing and to consider a GDL program.





# Comparisons With Other GDL Programs

As described earlier, countries other than Canada have GDL programs. This section provides an overview of the most common features – the structure and content – of GDL programs in other jurisdictions as well as unique features that distinguish them from GDL programs in Canada.

Also as noted earlier, New Zealand, the first jurisdiction to introduce a truly graduated licensing system in 1987, was influenced by the model system developed earlier by NHTSA in the United States and implemented, in part, in Maryland and California as demonstration projects. In turn, in the 1990s, the programs introduced in Canada, many U.S. states, and Australia were influenced by New Zealand's GDL program. It is, therefore, not surprising that there are similarities in the general structure and feature of all these GDL programs. At the same time, given the variations in GDL programs within Canada, described in the previous section, it is not surprising that there are important differences in GDL programs within and between other countries.

The tables in Appendix B, which are taken from various sources, provide details on the GDL licensing requirements in all U.S. and Australian jurisdictions and in New Zealand. The section below focuses on the most common practices and identifies the unique features that differ from GDL programs in Canada.

## General Features

**Multi-staged.** By definition, GDL programs are multi-staged. The norm is to have two stages – a learner and intermediate stage -- before full licensing. This is the case in GDL programs in Canada, the United States, and Australasia. However, the GDL program recently implemented in Saskatchewan has a learner stage and 2-novice stages. Three of the jurisdictions in Australia also have 3-stages before the full licence – Western Australia has 2-learner stages; New South Wales and the Australia Capital Territory have 2-intermediate stages. It could be argued that Manitoba has three stages since the zero BAC restriction in their GDL program extends for the first 12 months of the full licence and novices are still subject to a lower demerit point threshold.

**Young Drivers or Novice Drivers.** In all jurisdictions in Canada as well as in New Zealand, GDL applies to all new drivers, regardless of age. However, in Quebec, novice drivers 25 and over move from the learner stage to a full licence. In New Zealand, the low BAC limit only applies to those under the age of 20, and, those age 25 years and older, do not have to stay as long in the intermediate stage. Most Australian jurisdictions reduce the length of time for the learner permit for applicants age 25 and over. However, these older novices are still subject to the conditions of the intermediate stage(s).



In contrast, all jurisdictions in the United States, with the exception of Maryland and New Jersey, apply GDL to teenage drivers only, usually under the age of 18.

**Age-based or Time-based.** Unlike GDL programs in Canada, most programs in the United States are age-based in that the restrictions may be lifted after a certain age, typically at age 18. Like GDL programs in Canada, those in New Zealand and most Australian jurisdictions have a minimum mandatory holding period for the learner stage and the intermediate stage. As mentioned above, however, in most Australian jurisdictions the minimum duration of the learner stage, but not the intermediate stage(s), is waived for applicants age 25 and over. By contrast, in New Zealand the minimum duration of the intermediate stage, but not the learner stage, is shortened for novices age 25 and over.

## Learner Stage

### Entry age

- ❑ The minimum entry age is 16 in the majority of Canadian jurisdictions and in several Australian states. Most U.S. states allow 14 or 15 year olds to obtain a learner licence; the entry age is 15 in New Zealand; and it is 15 years and 9 months in the Australian Capital Territory.

### Minimum duration

- ❑ The most common practice is to require the learner's licence to be held for a minimum of six months – this is the case in several Canadian jurisdictions, the majority of U.S. states, New Zealand, and most Australian states. Longer learner periods are less common although seven jurisdictions in Canada have extended the minimum to 12 months (in a few of these the time requirement can be reduced by taking driver education – see below).
- ❑ Western Australia has two learner stages but there is no minimum period before applying to progress from the first to the second learner stage.
- ❑ Canada is relatively unique in allowing a reduction in the minimum holding period – i.e., the so-called “time discount” -- for successful completion of driver education. Four of the six Canadian jurisdictions that offer a time discount reduce the minimum holding period from 12 months to 8 or 9 months; in New Brunswick the minimum holding period is reduced from 12 months to 4 months; in Nova Scotia the reduction is from 6 months to 3 months. In the United States, only 4 jurisdictions – Connecticut, Indiana, New Jersey and South Dakota -- have such a time discount for driver education. Although the original GDL program in New Zealand included a time discount – from 6 months to 3 months – it was dropped when enhancements were introduced to the program a few years ago. However, in the intermediate stage, if the novice completes an approved course the length of the holding period is reduced. There is no time discount for driver education in Australian jurisdictions with one exception in the Northern Territory, learners who choose to take the 6-hours of theoretical competency-based training are not required to hold the learner licence for the mandatory 6-month period.

### Minimum amount of supervised driving

- ❑ In Canada, only one jurisdiction – the Yukon – requires parents to certify that a minimum number of hours have been driven under supervision (a minimum of 50 hours, including 10 hours in darkness and 10 different hours in winter conditions). New



Zealand also has no requirement for practice driving. By contrast, the majority of U.S. jurisdictions require a minimum amount of supervised driving practice, typically ranging from 30-50 hours, and a few include the requirement that some of these driving hours be at night. In a few U.S. jurisdictions, certification of supervised driving is waived for learners who complete driver education. Oregon requires 50 hours, if the learner also takes driver education, or 100 hours if they do not take driver education. Two Australian jurisdictions – New South Wales and Tasmania -- require 50 hours of supervised driving.

### **Passenger restrictions**

- ❑ In Canada, seven jurisdictions have passenger restrictions that generally include the supervisor only, or the supervisor plus one passenger. In Saskatchewan, between the hours of midnight and 5 a.m. passengers must be immediate family members. By contrast, only a few jurisdictions in the United States have passenger restrictions, typically a limit of one to three passengers plus the supervisor. New Zealand and all the Australian jurisdictions do not have passenger restrictions.

### **Night restrictions**

- ❑ Restrictions on driving at night are not common. In Canada, five jurisdictions have a night restriction, which prohibits driving between midnight and 5:00 a.m. The Northwest Territories has a night restriction between the hours of 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. A few U.S. jurisdictions have night restrictions, which range from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. (some of these are age-based and only apply to those under 18). New Zealand and Australia do not have night restrictions.

### **Mandatory driver education**

- ❑ This is a more common practice in the United States than elsewhere. In Canada, only 2 jurisdictions – Saskatchewan and Prince Edward Island -- require some form of driver education. Driver education is not a mandatory requirement in most Australian jurisdictions and in New Zealand. However, several U.S. jurisdictions have a mandatory driver education requirement, typically for novices under the age of 18.

### **Supervisory driver**

- ❑ In Canada, two jurisdictions have age requirements for the supervisor, 12 have license requirements, eight have a requirement for years of driving experience, and six have a BAC limit. In New Zealand, the supervisor must have had a full driver licence for at least two years. No Australian jurisdiction has age specifications for the supervisor. But, seven of the eight require the supervisor to have a full licence, with one requiring that a driver having their intermediate licence for one year may serve as a supervisor. Three require the supervisor to have from two to four years of driving experience. Three have a low BAC limit of .05. Very few U.S. jurisdictions mention any requirements regarding the supervisor other than they may be a parent/guardian or driving instructor (a few mention an age restriction).

### **BAC Limit**

- ❑ It is the norm to restrict drivers in the learners stage to a BAC limit that is lower than other drivers. In Canada, for novices in the learner stage of the GDL, all jurisdictions have a zero BAC limit. This is also the case in the United States but this arises from the 21-year old minimum drinking age laws, which are not considered a part of GDL programs. The GDL program in New Zealand has a low BAC limit of .03 for learners under 20 years and a BAC limit of .08 for those over 20 years. All Australian jurisdictions have a BAC limit -- five have zero and three have .02.



### Road/Speed Limit

- ❑ Only Australia has maximum speed restrictions; five of the 8 jurisdictions have them, ranging from 80 to 100 km/hr. Ontario has a de facto limit since driving is prohibited on expressways and certain high-speed highways. The U.S. jurisdictions, New Zealand and all but one Australian jurisdiction do not have road restrictions. In Western Australia, the first learner stage has a maximum speed limit of 100 km/h and no freeway driving. The second learner stage allows freeway driving but retains the speed restriction.

### L Sign/Plates

- ❑ Three jurisdictions in Canada and seven of the eight in Australia require learners to display an L sign/plate. This is not the case in any jurisdiction in the United States or in New Zealand.

## Intermediate Stage

### Entry age

- ❑ Entry age refers to the earliest age at which someone can move from the learner stage to the intermediate stage. It does not mean that this transition happens automatically when someone turns the requisite age because of the mandatory holding period in the learner stage. GDL programs in Canada, which are time-based, have an entry age lower than 17 years, ranging from age 16 to age 16 and 9 months. The majority of U.S. jurisdictions have an entry age of either age 16 or age 16 and a few months. The entry age in six U.S. jurisdictions is less than 16 and in New Jersey the entry age is 17. The entry age in New Zealand is 15 years and six months. Six of the eight Australian jurisdictions have a 17 or older entry age; the other two have age 16.5.

### Entry requirements

- ❑ Most GDL programs in Canada and elsewhere require the learner to pass an on-road practical test to obtain an intermediate licence. In Western Australia, the road test is actually taken to move from the first to the second learner stage. A hazard perception test must be passed to progress to the intermediate stage. In Victoria, the learner has to pass both a road test and a hazard perception test to obtain an intermediate licence. In New South Wales, the learner has to pass a road test to progress to the first intermediate stage and then a hazard perception test to progress to the second intermediate stage.

### Minimum duration

- ❑ In Canada, the minimum duration ranges from 12 months to 24 months. In Saskatchewan, the minimum duration for the Novice 1 stage is 6 months and the Novice 2 stage is 12 months. In the United States, the minimum holding period is related to age and the restrictions, such as no driving unsupervised at night are typically lifted at age 17 or age 18. In Australia, the length of the intermediate licence period ranges from one to three years, although this can be age dependent – e.g., in Queensland it is 3 years if aged under 23 years, 2 years if 23-24 years; and only one year if >24 years. In New Zealand, the minimum duration is 18 months for those under 25 years of age, or after six months if the novice is 25 years of age or older.
- ❑ No jurisdiction in Canada or Australia reduce the length of time on the intermediate stage for driver education and training. In the United States, however, a few jurisdictions lower the minimum age at which restrictions may be lifted if driver education has been completed – typically, from age 18 to age 17. In New Zealand, on successful completion of an approved course, the length of this stage is reduced from



18 months to 12 months for those aged under 25 years and, from 6 months to 3 months for those aged 25 or older.

### **Night restrictions**

- ❑ Night driving restrictions in the intermediate stage are more common in the United States and New Zealand. The majority of U.S. jurisdictions have some restriction on unsupervised night driving between the hours ranging from 8:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. New Zealand restricts unsupervised night driving from 10 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. In Canada, only three jurisdictions – Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, the Yukon – restrict unsupervised night driving, between the hours of 12:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. There are no night restrictions in Australia.

### **Passenger restrictions**

- ❑ Passenger restrictions are typically varied and complex. Eight Canadian jurisdictions currently have restrictions on the number of passengers. In British Columbia, only one passenger is allowed unless accompanied by a supervisor. In Saskatchewan, only one passenger, who is not an immediate family member, is allowed. In Nova Scotia and the Northwest Territories, there is a limit of one passenger in the front seat and up to the number of seat belts in the back. In Prince Edward Island, during the first year of the intermediate stage, only 3 passengers are allowed and in the second year there is a limit up to the number of seat belts. In the Yukon, the limits are not more than one passenger who is under 13 years old, and no combination of passengers that includes more than one passenger under 13 years old and more than one passenger who is over 12 but under 20 years unless there is a passenger in the vehicle who is at least 20 years old. In Manitoba, the passenger restriction is related to the time of day – e.g., from 5 a.m. to midnight, only one passenger in the front seat, and up to the number of functioning seat belts in the back seat; from midnight to 5 a.m., only one passenger unless a qualified supervisor is in the front seat. In Ontario, the passenger restriction relates to both the time of day and the age of the novice driver as well as of the passenger – between midnight and 5 a.m., drivers 19 and under are prohibited from carrying more than one passenger age 19 and under during the driver's first six months on this stage, and more than three passengers aged 19 and under for the duration of the driver's time on this stage or until the driver turns 20, unless the driver is accompanied by a driver fully licensed for at least four years.
- ❑ In the United States, the majority of jurisdictions have some form of passenger restriction. Among these jurisdictions, several have their restrictions only for the first 3-6 months. In some of the jurisdictions, the restrictions are age-based and do not apply, for example, to drivers over 18. The restrictions include no passengers, no passengers unless accompanied by a supervisor, and one to three passengers. A few jurisdictions have age limits on the passengers (e.g., limiting the transport of persons age 18 or under or age 20 and under). In New Zealand, the only passengers allowed without a supervisor are family members; other passengers are allowed when accompanied by a supervisor. Only one Australian jurisdiction – Victoria -- has a passenger restriction, but it is only applied if the driver's licence has been disqualified in the first year. The driver is then limited to one passenger.

### **N Sign/Plates**

- ❑ British Columbia is the only jurisdiction in Canada to require an N sign/plate. This is a requirement in seven of eight Australian jurisdictions. Jurisdictions in the United States and New Zealand do not require N sign/plate.



### **BAC limit**

- ❑ All jurisdictions in Canada have a BAC limit. This is also the case in the United States but again this arises from the 21-year old minimum drinking age laws, which are not considered a part of GDL programs. The GDL program in New Zealand has a low BAC limit of .03 for novices under 20 years and a BAC limit of .08 for those over 20 years. All jurisdictions in Australia also have a low BAC limit. Five have zero and three have .02.

### **Speed/road restrictions**

- ❑ There are no restrictions on the types of roads that can be used by those in the intermediate stage in Canada, the United States or in New Zealand. Five of eight Australian jurisdictions have a speed restriction – the maximum posted limits range from 80 km/hr to 110 km/hr.

### **Transmission restriction**

- ❑ This does not exist in Canada or the United States. However, a few Australian jurisdictions and New Zealand have it – typically, driving of a manual transmission vehicle is not allowed if the novice did their road test in a vehicle with an automatic transmission.

### **Vehicle power restriction**

- ❑ This does not exist in Canada, the United States or in New Zealand. However, one Australian jurisdiction has it. In Victoria, novices must not drive a high-powered vehicle defined as a motor vehicle (not a motorcycle or motor trike) that has a power to mass ratio exceeding 125 kilowatts per tonne or has an engine capacity exceeding 3.5 litres per tonne of the unladen mass of the motor vehicle.

### **Exit Requirements**

- ❑ Exit requirements in Canada are time-based (e.g., after 5 years) typically tied to the renewal of the licence, whereas in the United States they are mostly age-based – e.g., turning 18. In Australia, all jurisdictions have a maximum duration. The length of their intermediate period ranges from 1 to 3 years.
- ❑ Three jurisdictions in Canada require the novice to pass an advanced, on-road, test to graduate to a full licence; no U.S. state has such a requirement. Similar to a few jurisdictions in Canada, New Zealand also requires the novice to pass a full, on-road, licence test that focuses on basic driving as well as on detecting and responding to driving hazards. One Australian jurisdiction – New South Wales -- requires an exit test (which is a combination of an advanced hazard perception test), a further test of the road rules and knowledge of safe driving practices.



# Safety Impact

There is a growing body of research demonstrating that graduated licensing is an effective safety measure. Almost all the scientific evaluations conducted to date have reported positive safety benefits. Studies into the safety effectiveness of graduated driver licensing in New Zealand, Canada, and the United States have shown overall reductions in crashes ranging from 4% to 60%. Given the diversity of the programs, it is not surprising that the magnitude of the crash reductions reported to date have varied so much.

However, this variability may also be a result of the different evaluation designs and statistical analyses used in the studies, ranging from simple pre-post comparisons with no control group(s), which are needed to account for the effects of other factors and events influencing collisions, to the use of powerful interrupted time series analysis. As well, the basic groups being studied have differed e.g., the New Zealand program originally applied to drivers under the age of 25; the Canadian programs apply to all novices not just young ones; the Australian programs also apply to all novice except the learner phase is generally waived or reduced for those age 25 and over, and the U.S. programs apply primarily to drivers under the age of 18.

Perhaps most studied has been the New Zealand program, that was implemented in 1987 (Frith et al. 1992; Langley et al. 1996; Begg et al. 2001; Begg and Stephenson 2003). The initial evaluations reported rather substantial reductions in casualty collisions of approximately 25% and these impressive effects were widely cited. The longer-term evaluations have found sustained and significant effects but the reductions are more in the order of 7% to 8%. According to Begg and Stephenson (2003), an update of the most recent crash statistics indicated that, compared with older age groups, the fatal and serious injury crash rate among young people has remained substantially below the pre-GDL level.

## GDL Evaluations in Canada

In Canada, studies into the effectiveness of graduated driver licensing programs implemented in Ontario in 1994, Nova Scotia in 1994, Quebec in 1997 and, British Columbia in 1998 have all reported collision reductions among all age groups of novice drivers. A summary of the findings is displayed in Table 3.

**Ontario.** Boase and Tasca (1998) conducted an interim evaluation of the Ontario program using a simple pre-post comparison group design. They found that the overall collision rate per 10,000 novice drivers licensed in 1995 (program group) was 31% lower than the rate observed for 1993 novice drivers (comparison group). The overall collision rate declined with the introduction of GDL for all age groups of novice drivers: a 31% reduction among those aged 16-19; a 42% reduction among 20-24 year olds; a 38% reduction among 25-34 year olds; a 37%



reduction among 35 to 44 year olds; a 24% reduction among 45-54 year olds; and a 19% reduction among novice drivers aged 55 and over.

**Table 3**  
**GDL Evaluations in Canada**

Province	GDL Date	Authors	Target Goup(s)	Results	
				% Reduction	Measures
Nova Scotia	1994	Mayhew et al. 2001	drivers age 16	-37%	number of crashes
				-31%	number of injury crashes
				-24%	per capita crash rate
				-34%	per capita casualty crash rate
			all novice drivers	-19%	per driver crash rate
			age 16	-22%	
age 17-24	-21%				
age 25+	-43%				
Nova Scotia	1994	Mayhew et al. 2003	all novice drivers		
			age 16-17	-29%	per driver crash rate (L stage 1st year)
				-9%	per driver crash rate (I stage 1st year)
				-11%	per driver crash rate (I stage 2nd year)
				no change	per driver crash rate (additional 3rd year)
			age 18 and older	-31%	per driver crash rate (L stage 1st year)
				-2%	per driver crash rate (I stage 1st year)
				+24%	per driver crash rate (I stage 2nd year)
	+32%	per driver crash rate (additional 3rd year)			
Ontario	1994	Boase and Tasca 1998	all novice drivers	-31%	per driver crash rate
			age 16-19	-31%	
			age 20-24	-42%	
			age 25-34	-38%	
			age 35-44	-37%	
			age 45-54	-24%	
			age 55+	-19%	
all novice drivers	-24%	per driver casualty crash rate			
Quebec	1997	Bouchard et al. 2000	all novice drivers	-5%	number of fatalities
				-14%	number of injuries
				-7%	per driver fatality rate
				-17%	per driver injury rate
British Columbia	1998	Wiggins 2004	all novice drivers	-16% to -17%	per driver crash rate

The effects of the alcohol, night and freeway restrictions in Ontario were also examined and found to be effective: reductions were observed in alcohol-related collisions (a 27% decline), collisions between midnight and 5 a.m. (a 62% decline) and collisions on freeways (a 61% decline). By contrast, the “time discount” for driver education was not found to be associated with a reduction of collision involvement – drivers with certificates from approved driving schools had an overall collision rate that was 44% higher than novices without this certificate.

**Nova Scotia.** The evaluation of the graduated licensing program in Nova Scotia by TIRF (Mayhew et al. 2001) used a series of increasingly refined analyses that controlled for the



influence of other explanatory variables. All the analyses showed that the GDL program was associated with a significant reduction in crashes. For drivers age 16, before and after comparisons (1993 versus 1995, the first full year of the program) showed a 24% reduction in total per-capita crash rates, relative to the control group (drivers age 25 and over). Crash rates in 1996 were 36% lower than in 1993, showing that the initial impact was sustained. Comparable decreases occurred in injury crash rates. Improvements were observed for all novice drivers, not just those who were young. The crash rate for all new drivers dropped by 19% between 1993 and 1995.

A more recent follow-up evaluation of the specific and long-term effects of the Nova Scotia program (Mayhew et al. 2003) confirmed the results described above but of considerable interest found that most of the declines in collisions occurred during the learner stage. Crash rates, standardized by number of licensed drivers, were significantly lower during the learner stage for GDL drivers age 16-17 than for pre-GDL drivers age 16-17 (29% reduction the first year). This was also true of older novice drivers 18 years and older (31% reduction the first year). During the intermediate stage, GDL drivers age 16-17 continued to exhibit a significant reduction in crash rates (9% for the first year and 11% for the second). However, older GDL novices were not different from pre-GDL novices during the first year and, actually, exhibited a 24% increase in crash rates during the second year.

Looking specifically at the intermediate stage, it was found that all GDL drivers had significantly lower crash rates than pre-GDL drivers, during the hours of restricted night driving (45-60% lower from midnight to 5 a.m.). GDL drivers also had an 11% reduction in crash rates for the first 6 months during the hours of 5 a.m. to midnight. Comparing GDL drivers who completed driver education to those who did not revealed no reduction in crash rates. In fact, GDL drivers who completed driver education had a significantly higher crash rate (20% higher). It was speculated that the time discount associated with driver education completion did not provide a "safety benefit". This finding was entirely consistent with what was found in the Ontario evaluation.

**Quebec.** The graduated driver-licensing program implemented in Quebec in 1997 was also shown to be effective (Bouchard et al. 2000). They found, after adjusting for changes in deaths and injuries among the control group, a 5% reduction in fatalities and a 14% reduction in injuries attributable to the new program. Reductions of 7% and 17% were also found in the per-driver fatality rate and the injury rate. Their analyses also showed that alcohol-related fatalities and injuries declined by 9%.

**British Columbia.** Wiggins (2004) conducted an evaluation of British Columbia's graduated licensing program (GLP) by examining differences in per-driver crash rates and violations before (August 1, 1996 to July 31, 1997) and after (August 1, 1998 to July 31, 1999) the program was implemented. They found a 13.3% reduction in the overall crash rate of GLP drivers and a 16-17% reduction after adjusting the data for age, gender and driver time. In addition, there was a 12% reduction in the overall crash rate for GLP drivers who graduated to the novice stage during the study period. Though no differences were found in the proportion of



late night crashes or crashes involving prohibited passengers, GLP drivers had a higher incidence of alcohol-related crashes. The authors note that this may be partly due to higher police reporting of alcohol involvement due to the GLP zero BAC limit.

## GDL Evaluations in the United States

In the United States, evaluations have been conducted on GDL implemented in Florida in 1996, North Carolina in 1997, Michigan in 1997, Ohio in 1997, California in 1998, and Utah in 1999 (2001). Almost all have found safety benefits and the key findings are displayed in Table 4. All these programs include a night restriction in the intermediate stage, ranging from 9:00 p.m.-5:00 a.m. in North Carolina, to 1 a.m.-5 a.m. in Ohio. The program in California and Utah also include a restriction on teen passengers – in California, no passengers younger than 20 can be transported by someone with a graduated licence during the first six months of the intermediate stage, unless they are supervised by a 25-year-old driver; in Utah, no passengers, other than the immediate family, unless supervised, after 6 months or at age 18.

In addition, the “partial” graduated licensing programs introduced in Kentucky in 1996 and Connecticut in 1997 have also proven effective in reducing the crash involvement of teen drivers. Neither of these programs have an intermediate stage but both have an extended learner stage with a mandatory six-month holding period.

Recently, Dee et al. (2005) examined the effects of GDL on teen traffic fatalities in the U.S. They report that GDL reduced traffic fatalities among 15-17 year-olds by at least 5.6%, and that there was no evidence that these benefits were attenuated by an increase in fatality risks during the full-licensure period available to older teens. As well, their results suggest that stronger, more stringent, GDL programs appear to have the greatest reductions in motor vehicle fatalities among 15-17 year-olds.

**California.** The GDL program in California has undergone four evaluations. All but one of these found overall safety benefits. The one that did not find an overall effect did, however, find reductions related to the night and passenger restrictions.

The Automobile Club (2001) reported that the number of fatal and at-fault injury crashes among 16-year-old drivers declined by 23% following implementation of the graduated licensing program in 1998; at-fault non-injury collisions of 16 year olds declined by 17% over this period. There was also a 40% decline in teen passenger deaths and injuries in vehicles driven by 16-year-old drivers.

Rice, Peek-Asa, and Kraus (2004) also assessed the effectiveness of California’s program by comparing per capita crash rates of 16- and 17-year old drivers prior to the introduction of GDL (1997) with crash rates during two post-GDL years (2000 and 2001). A reduction in fatal or severe injury crash rates was found for both age groups across both post-GDL years. This translated into an overall reduction of 28%, comparing 1997 to 2000, and a 17% reduction,



**Table 4**  
**GDL Evaluations in the United States**

State	GDL Date	Authors	Target Goup(s)	Results	
				% Reduction	Measures
California	1998	AA Southern Cal. 2001	drivers age 16	-23% -17% -40%	number of casualty at-fault crashes number of non-injury at-fault crashes number of teen pass. deaths/injuries
California	1998	Rice et al. 2004	drivers age 16-17	-17% to -28% -20% to -29% -17% to -22% -28% to -37% -10% to -13%	per capita fatal or severe injury crash rate per capita struck object crash rate per capita multiple vehicle crash rate per capita non-collision crash rate per capita minor injury crash rate
California	1998	Cooper et al. 2004	drivers age 16	-19% to -26% -17%	per capita fatal/injury crash rate number of at-fault crashes
California	1998	Masten and Hagge 2004	drivers age 15-17 drivers age 16 drivers age 16-17	no change no change -9% -14%	per capita fatal/injury crash rate per capita fatal/injury crash rate proportion of night crashes proportion of crashes with pass. under 20
Connecticut	1997	Ulmer et al. 2001	drivers age 16-18	-22%	per capita casualty crash rate
Florida	1996	Ulmer et al. 2000	drivers age 15-17 age 15 age 16 age 17	-9% -19% -11% -7%	per capita casualty crash rate
Kentucky	1998	Agent and Pigman 2000	drivers age 16-18	-33% -34% -28% -32%	number of crashes number of fatal crashes number of injury crashes per driver crash rate
Michigan	1997	Shope et al. 2001	drivers age 16	-25% -24%	per capita crash rate per capita injury crash rate
Michigan	1997	Elliot and Shope 2003	drivers age 16	-25% -24%	per capita crash rate per capita single vehicle crash rate
Michigan	1997	Shope et al. 2004	drivers age 16	-29% -44% -38% -38%	per capita crash rate per capita fatal crash rate per capita fatal plus non-fatal injury rate per capita non-fatal injury rate
North Carolina	1997	Foss et al. 2001	drivers age 16	-23% -57% -28% -23% -19%	per capita crash rate per capita fatal crash rate per capita injury crash rate per capita non-injury crash rate per driver crash rate
Ohio	1999	Dept. of Public Safety	drivers age 16-17	-60% -69% -59% -60% -23% -24% -21% -23%	per capita crash rate per capita fatal crash rate per capita injury crash rate per capita non-injury crash rate per driver crash rate per driver fatal crash rate per driver injury crash rate per driver non-injury crash rate
Utah	1999-2001	Hyde et al. 2005	drivers age 16	-5%	per capita crash rate



comparing 1997 to 2001. The reduction in fatal or severe injury crash rates for females was approximately twice that of males in both post-GDL years. Significant reductions were also found for all crash subtypes including struck object (29% and 20% comparing 1997 to 2000 and 2001, respectively), multiple vehicle (22% and 17% comparing 1997 to 2000 and 2001, respectively), and non-collision (37% and 28% comparing 1997 to 2000 and 2001, respectively). Minor injury crash rates were significantly lower, with a 13% reduction, comparing 1997 to 2000, and a 10% reduction, comparing 1997 to 2001. This reduction was more noticeable in 16-year-old drivers (23% and 20% comparing 1997 to 2000 and 2001, respectively) than 17 year olds (6% and 3% comparing 1997 to 2000 and 2001, respectively).

For both fatal or severe injury and minor injury crash rates, a greater reduction was found during the hours of night restricted driving – approximately a 35% reduction for fatal or severe injury for both post-GDL years and a 13-21% reduction for minor injury.

Cooper, Gillen, and Atkins (2004) compared the per capita crash rates of 16-year-old drivers pre-GDL (1996) with two post-GDL years (1999-2000). They found a 19% reduction in involved and at-fault fatal and injury crash rates, comparing 1996 to 1999. This reduction was approximately 26% comparing 1996 to 2000. Using time series analysis, a temporary and permanent effect was found on the number of at-fault crashes, translating into a 17% reduction.

Looking at the restrictions, a 21% decline in per capita crash rates was found during curfew hours (comparing 1996 to 1999) and a 26% reduction comparing 1996 to 2000. A further regression analysis showed a significant reduction of about 25% in the average number of teen passengers carried by drivers age 16 in crashes after GDL introduction.

In contrast to the three evaluations described above, Masten and Hagge (2004) found no overall effect of California's program on the per capita crash rates of 15-17 year old drivers. Using time series analyses, comparing 54 months pre-GDL (January 1994 to June 1998) with 54 months post-GDL (July 1998 to December 2001), no temporary or permanent changes in fatal/injury per capita rates were observed. This was the case even after removing shared variability with an adult series, correcting for the transition effect (i.e., an increase in the number of drivers obtaining their learner's permit just prior to GDL introduction), and moving the transition point, which marks the time of GDL introduction, by 6 months to one full year ahead. The same was true for a separate analysis using only 16-year-old drivers.

The sudden-permanent intervention model was significant for the hours of the night driving restriction, six months and one year following GDL introduction. This indicated an approximate 9% sudden reduction in fatal/injury crashes associated with the night driving restriction. Also, the gradual-permanent intervention model was significant for the passenger restriction, six months and one year following GDL introduction. This suggested about a 14% reduction in fatal/injury crashes associated with the passenger restriction.



**Connecticut.** The safety effect of the mandatory extended learner's permit, one component of graduated licensing, which was implemented in Connecticut in 1997, was evaluated (Ulmer et al. 2001). They found that the per-capita casualty crash rate among 16-year-old drivers, declined by 22%, relative to the rate among 25 to 54-year-old drivers – a statistically significant change.

**Florida.** The per capita casualty crash rates among 15- to 17-year-old drivers before the implementation of the Florida graduated licensing program were compared to those after the program was in place, relative to the experience of 15- to 17-year-old drivers in Alabama over a similar time frame (Ulmer et al. 2000). The authors found that there was a significant 9% reduction in the casualty involvement rate of 15 to 17-year-old drivers in Florida during 1997, the first full year of graduated licensing. The greatest reduction occurred among 15 year olds (a 19% reduction), followed by 16 year olds (an 11% reduction) and then 17 year olds (a 7% reduction). There were no significant changes for any of the age groups in Alabama, the comparison state. (See also McCartt et al. 2001 for related data on the effects of the Florida program on attitudes and behaviours.)

Further comparisons of the actual and projected casualty crash involvements among 15-17 year olds revealed that nighttime (11:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.) crash involvements declined more than daytime crashes (17% and 7%, respectively).

**Kentucky.** Agent et al. (2001) evaluated the impact of the partial graduated licensing program implemented in Kentucky in 1996. They compared the number of collisions as well as the per-driver collision rates of 16 year olds, older teens, and adults, in periods before and after the new law. To control for the effects of changes in the number of drivers, the authors compared per-driver crash rates for the various age groups. The per-driver collision rate for 16-year-old drivers after the introduction of GDL was 32% lower than it was prior to its introduction. Similar reductions were not observed among older control groups.

Of some importance, the lower per-driver crash rates among 16 year olds were due to an 83% decrease in the number of their collisions occurring during the first six months after their sixteenth birthday – i.e., when they were in the extended learner stage of the new program. By contrast, drivers in the intermediate stage – i.e., those age 16.5 to 17 – actually had a 3% increase in the number of crashes following GDL. They also found no long-term impact of the program for 17- and 18-year-old drivers.

The authors conclude that there was no long-term reduction in crash rates associated with the GDL program but they also emphasized that Kentucky has only a partial GDL program and there is a need to upgrade it by limiting the number and age of passengers, limiting unsupervised nighttime driving (after 9 p.m. or 10 p.m.), and requiring teens to be violation-free for a period of time before being allowed to graduate to the next licence stage. They indicate that such improvements might yield a longer-term safety impact.



**Michigan.** The GDL program implemented in Michigan in 1997 is also being evaluated (Shope et al. 2001; Elliott and Shope 2003; Shope and Mohnar 2004). In a report on initial findings from the ongoing study, the authors found that, after adjusting for population-wide trends, the overall per-capita collision rate of 16-year-old drivers declined significantly by 25% between 1996 and 1999. There were also significant reductions over this period in non-fatal injury crashes (a 24% reduction) as well as in crashes occurring at night (a 53% reduction between midnight and 5 a.m.), during the evening (a 21% reduction between 9 p.m. and 12 a.m.) and during the day (a 24% reduction between 5 a.m. and 9 p.m.). Although the per-capita fatal crash rate also declined from 1996 to 1999, this difference was not statistically significant.

Elliott and Shope (2003) continued the investigation by using time series analysis (Bayesian Change-point Model) on the rates (per 1,000 16-year-old population) of all crashes, night crashes, and single-vehicle crashes, to determine if the trends found previously, using relative risk, were maintained. They concluded that GDL had a substantial effect on the crash rates of all crashes such that, during the first 12 to 18 months following GDL implementation, the crash rate declined by 25%. However, they suggest that the previous findings on single-vehicle crash rates are not as certain. The approximate 30% reduction in single-vehicle crashes following GDL implementation is likely to be closer to 24%. In addition, the decline in nighttime crash rates, which was estimated to be approximately 50%, is partly due to a downward trend that began in 1995/1996 and its rate was largely unaffected by the implementation of GDL.

In a more recent report from their ongoing evaluation, Shope and Molnar (2004) compared per capita crash rates of 16-year-old drivers before GDL implementation (1996) with four post-GDL years (1998-2001). A significant reduction in crash rates was found for all post-GDL years. Using 2001 as the most recent comparison year, a significant reduction in crash risk was found for all crashes (29%) and all crash subtypes including fatal (44%), fatal plus non-fatal injury (38%), non-fatal injury (38%), multi-vehicle (32%), and single vehicle (32%). Even after adjusting for population-wide changes in crash reduction, using a comparison group of drivers over the age of 24, the crash rate reduction was still significantly lower post-GDL (19% reduction for all crashes using the comparison of 2001 to 1996). This reduction differed little by gender such that crash rates for young men remained approximately 15-20% higher than for young women.

With respect to the night driving restriction, the greatest reduction in crash rates (59% for the 2001 comparison year) was found for the hours of midnight to 4:59 a.m. Significant reductions were also observed for day and evening categories across all four post-GDL years. Significant reductions in crash rates were also found for all crashes involving passengers, regardless of number (34-46% reduction). However, when compared to older drivers, the crash rate of 16 year olds was approximately three times higher across all four post-GDL years.

**North Carolina.** In a preliminary evaluation of the graduated licensing program implemented in North Carolina in 1997, Foss et al. (2001) reported that the per-capita crash rate of 16-year-old drivers declined by 23% (or by 27% adjusting for the overall crash trend among drivers age 25-54). Per-capita crash rates declined for all levels of severity among 16-year-old



drivers after the new program was implemented – fatal crashes declined by 57%, injury crashes by 28%, and non-injury crashes by 23%. Reductions were also observed for nighttime crashes (a 43% reduction between 9 p.m. and 5 a.m.) and daytime crashes (a decrease of 20%).

**Ohio.** The preliminary evaluation of the graduated licensing program implemented in Ohio in 1997 found that, after adjusting for changes in the crash rates of the control group (drivers age 25-54), both the per-capita and per-driver crash rates of teens licensed under the new program were lower than those of teens licensed under the old program (Department of Public Safety 2001). The overall per-driver crash rate of teen drivers in the program, relative to drivers age 25-54, was 23% lower than the rate for teen drivers not in the program. Similar reductions were observed for collisions of all severities – fatal (a decrease of 24%), injury (a 21% decrease), and property damage only (a decrease of 23%) – as well as for alcohol-related collisions – a 27% decrease in the alcohol-related crash rate.

**Utah.** Hyde, Cook, Knight, and Olson (2005) used the crash rates (per 1,000 licensed drivers) of 16-year-old drivers pre- and post-GDL implementation to investigate the effectiveness of Utah's GDL program. They found that the overall crash rate was reduced by 5%. However, using time series analysis and accounting for the already decreasing trend in 16-year old involved crashes, this difference was found to be marginal. They also did not find a significant difference in the nighttime crash rates following the implementation of nighttime driving restrictions, nor did they find any differences following the implementation of passenger restrictions. There was a positive linear trend in seatbelt usage, such that post-GDL drivers wore their seatbelts 94% of the time, compared to 87% pre-GDL. There was no difference in the rate of crashes by injury severity.

## Key Features

The fundamental principles on which GDL is based are relatively straightforward – initially create a low risk driving environment for the novice through a set of restrictions; then ease the novice into more demanding situations as they mature and gain experience. In practice, the application of these principles has resulted in a diversity of programs that vary in terms of the conditions and restrictions that are applied to the new driver. Despite this variability, it has been consistently shown that GDL programs are effective. However, less is known about the effectiveness of the wide range of specific elements in GDL programs, and this certainly hampers efforts to provide advice regarding how the “best” program should be designed.

Nonetheless, the safety value of a few key features of GDL programs – e.g., zero BAC, night restriction, supervision, no passengers, driver education -- has received at least some research attention and this is discussed below. Based on the strength of the scientific evidence, the merits of including the condition or restriction in a GDL program is considered. Where direct evidence is lacking, the indirect evidence and the rationale for the measure are considered as a basis to support or reject it.



## Knowledge and Skill Tests

Tests are designed to ensure that people are competent to drive and that they are aware of safe driving practices and road law. Basically, the test(s) sets the minimum standards for “safe” driving and provides a means to ascertain if someone has achieved that standard and can, therefore, graduate from the learner or intermediate stage.

Although knowledge and skill tests are commonplace in GDL programs, few jurisdictions have determined whether or not they are effective in screening out drivers who are not competent. Early evaluations of the effectiveness of skill tests have largely produced conflicting findings. In a review of these studies, MacDonald (1987) as well as McPherson and McKnight (1981) concluded that “the road test lacked sufficient predictive validity to support their use as a screening device in determining who will be permitted to drive”.

A more recent investigation of the Driving Performance Evaluation Road Test, a much more reliable test than the standard drive test in California, failed to find any reduction in accident involvement or traffic law violations resulting from the implementation of the program (Gebers et al. 1998).

By contrast, unlike most other driver performance measures or road tests, a computerized test developed and used in Victoria, Australia – the Hazard Perception Test – was able to predict those novice drivers likely to be involved in casualty crashes. Congdon (1999) found that novices with very low scores on the test had higher crash involvement than novices with average and high scores.

In summary, the rationale for knowledge and skill testing is compelling but traditional tests have largely failed to discriminate adequately between safe and unsafe drivers. The need is to improve the quality and safety potential of the tests, for example, by focusing more on hazard perception, and this is in fact the direction that has been pursued recently in several jurisdictions both in terms of computerized tests and on-road tests that require learners to identify potential hazards – e.g., British Columbia, New Zealand, and New South Wales, Australia (Mayhew et al. under review).

## Supervision

Research shows that supervised driving is a relatively safe activity – i.e., few novice drivers crash when they are driving under supervision (Williams et al. 1997; Mayhew et al. 2001). Recent evaluations of GDL also suggest that declines in collisions occurred mostly during the learner stage, when beginners are driving under supervision (e.g., Mayhew et al. 2003). This suggests that a longer learner phase – e.g., 12-months rather than 6-months minimum duration – has safety benefits because it delays licensure and provides an opportunity for driving practice and skill development under supervision (McKnight and Peck 2002).



## Zero or Low BAC Limits

Evaluations of those countries that have included lower alcohol limits as part of their licensing system generally show that the limits are effective in reducing collisions (Mayhew and Simpson 1990). Research has also shown that low BAC limits reduce the likelihood of collision among young drivers (Simpson and Mayhew 1992; Mayhew and Simpson 1999). And, as reviewed in the previous section, several of the evaluations of GDL programs in jurisdictions with zero or low BAC limits found reductions in alcohol-related collisions among novice drivers (see Boase and Tasca 1998; Bouchard et al. 2000; Ohio Dept. of Public Safety 1999). Accordingly, a zero BAC limit applied during the learner and intermediate stages appears warranted.

A zero or low BAC limit for the supervisor in the vehicle of a learner or novice driver also makes sense because they are in the vehicle not only to monitor and influence the learners practice driving but also to take over the driving, if necessary. However, the impact of the provision has not been studied.

## No Passengers

Research shows that unsupervised driving with teenage passengers increases crash risk compared with driving alone (Preusser et al. 1998; Williams 2000, 2001, 2003; Chen et al. 2001; Williams and Ferguson 2002; Lin and Fearn 2003). Fatal crash risk has been found to increase with every additional teenage passenger in the vehicle; the presence of three or more passengers increases the risk of fatal crash for young drivers four times what their risk is when driving alone.

Looking specifically at the effects of teenage passengers on young drivers, Chen, Braver, Baker, and Li (2001) used two U.S. national databases to investigate the differences in road user death rates of young drivers carrying passengers, who were less than 20 years old, compared to rates when they were driving alone. This data year (1995) predates any implementation of a passenger restriction in the United States. They found that the road user death rate for 16-17 year old drivers carrying young passengers was approximately three times that for the same age group not carrying passengers and about four times that of 18-year-old drivers carrying any passengers. The researchers estimated that if 16-17 year old drivers were restricted from carrying passengers younger than 20, given varying compliance rates, there would be 7-42% fewer road user deaths. Similar reductions of between 8% and 44% were predicted for 16 year olds. Even if compliance was only 50% among the 16-17 year old group, the researchers predicted a reduction of 15-22%.

As described in the previous section, evaluations of the GDL programs in California and Michigan, jurisdictions that have passenger restrictions, reported reductions in teenage crashes involving passengers (Automobile Club 2001; Cooper et al. 2004; Masten et al. 2004; Shope and Molnar 2004). Begg, Stephenson, and Langley (2001) have also found that, in New Zealand, compared to pre-GDL drivers, restricted license drivers had a smaller proportion of crashes involving passengers of all ages.



Cooper, Atkins, and Gillen (2005) also conducted a recent study looking at the effects of the specific GDL restriction involving teenage passengers in California. They found that the percentage of 16-year-old drivers involved in at-fault collisions while carrying teenage passengers was significantly higher than that for 16-year-old drivers involved in not-at-fault collisions, carrying teenage passengers. This was also true for the age groups 17-19 and 20-24. The difference was significant with the age group 25-54, but in the opposite direction, suggesting that the presence of teenage passengers promoted safer driving in this older age group. These trends are the same when the average number of teenage passengers in vehicles involved in crashes was used as the dependent variable. Regression analysis revealed that the average number of teenage passengers in vehicles driven by 16 year olds involved in crashes, significantly decreased following GDL introduction. This was not true for 20-24 year old drivers.

Accordingly, a restriction on passengers, particularly teen passengers, in the vehicles of teenage novices, at least in the critical intermediate stage when the novice is driving unsupervised, is supported by the research evidence.

### Night Driving Restriction

Night driving is more difficult and more dangerous than driving during daylight hours for drivers of all ages. Research has established that night driving is especially risky for young beginners and there is substantial evidence that night curfews are effective in reducing crashes (Williams and Preusser 1997; Preusser et al. 1984; Williams 2003; Lin and Fearn 2003). Night curfews may even have a beneficial impact on collisions in non-restricted hours (McKnight et al. 1993).

As described in the previous section, several evaluations of GDL programs in Nova Scotia, Ontario, California, Florida, and Michigan -- jurisdictions with night restrictions in the learner and/or intermediate stages -- have found reductions in collisions during nighttime hours (Mayhew et al. 2003, Boase and Tasca 1998; Rice et al. 2004; Cooper et al. 2004; Masen et al. 2004; Ulmer et al. 2000; Shope et al. 2001; Shope and Molnar 2004; Foss et al. 2001). Begg, Stephenson, and Langley (2001) have also found that, in New Zealand, compared to pre-GDL drivers, restricted licence drivers had a smaller proportion of nighttime crashes during curfew hours. Research also suggests that the earlier the hour the night restriction is applied, the greater the safety benefit (Foss and Goodwin 2003; Williams and Mayhew 2004).

Accordingly, limiting the unsupervised driving by novices during the nighttime is a restriction that is strongly supported by research.

### Driver Education/Training

A few GDL programs mandate driver education; some allow novices to graduate sooner if they successfully complete driver education – i.e., driver education permits a “time discount”. However, research has shown that driver education/training programs have not reduced crashes – TIRF (Mayhew and Simpson 1996) reviewed the evaluation research in three countries –



Canada, the United States and Europe – and found no compelling evidence that training is associated with reductions in collisions. These findings are consistent with much of the evidence on the effectiveness of formal instruction (Mayhew and Simpson 2002).

Therefore, the practice of reducing the length of time in the GDL program for successfully completing a driver education course is questionable at best. Even worse, a few recent studies of GDL programs in Ontario and Nova Scotia, reviewed in the previous section, show that “time discounts” for novice drivers may actually have a detrimental safety impact. Formally trained novices who received the “time discount” were found to have a much higher crash rate than untrained novices who did not (Boase and Tasca 1999; Mayhew et al. 2003).

Similar results were found in an evaluation of the GDL program in British Columbia. (Wiggins 2004). The crash rates of GDL drivers, who had submitted a Declaration of Completion (DOC) of an ICBC-approved training course, were higher than the crash rates of those who had not submitted a DOC. Following adjustments for age and gender, crash rates were higher in both the learner and novice stage. Driver education groups were further broken down to include: (1) ICBC-approved course with time credit, (2) ICBC-approved course with no time credit, (3) not an ICBC-approved course, and (4) none. Using these groupings and considering any crash, as well as liable crashes, during the first 6 months of Novice licensure, it was found that those who had completed an ICBC-approved course and received the time credit had a higher crash rate. Because driving exposure could be a factor in crash risk, exposure information was obtained by means of a survey in November 2003. This included exposure during the first month, first 6 months, weekday hours and kms, and weekend hours and kms. Looking again at the different driver education groups and controlling for age, gender, and driving exposure, crash risk – for both liable crashes and any crash – was still higher for those who completed an ICBC-approved course than for those who had no formal training or had taken a driver education course that was not ICBC-approved.

The author proposed a number of reasons for these findings. They include: (1) passing too quickly through the learner stage, (2) motivation for taking driver education was the time credit, (3) lack of maturity and experience, and (4) personality factors, though not investigated in this study.

Given these consistent findings there is no justification for offering a “time discount” for taking driver education. Indeed, the evidence suggests that doing so increases rather than decreases the risk for novice drivers. This is not to suggest that jurisdictions should not encourage driver education and training because it can be a superior way to learn basic driving skills and it can contribute to the beginner’s on-road experience – i.e., practice. But novices should not be allowed to graduate sooner from the GDL program if they take driver education and training (Williams 2004; Mayhew and Simpson 2003).



## Certified Practice

A few jurisdictions now require parents to certify that a certain number of hours – e.g., 40 to 50 hours – have been driven under supervision. Although the safety benefits of certified driving practice have not been evaluated, research has demonstrated the value of more practice driving. In this regard, Gregersen (1997) found that in Sweden, novices with 126 hours of supervised driving experience had a 35% lower crash risk than those with about 40 hours. Requiring a minimum amount of practice hours is also consistent with the rationale of graduated licensing – i.e., allow the novice to gain driving experience under low risk conditions.

## Advanced Exit Tests

A number of jurisdictions have introduced, or are considering, advanced “exit” on-road or computer-based skill tests for novice drivers. Such tests are administered prior to leaving the GDL program to ensure the novice has actually driven and acquired the needed experience and skills. These advanced tests typically assess higher-order safe driving skills, such as, hazard perception.

The use of advanced testing is so recent that evidence of its effectiveness in reducing crashes of young drivers is not yet available. However, a hazard perception computer test initially developed as an exit test but used as an entry test to move from a learner stage to an intermediate stage in Victoria, Australia, has been found to be predictive of safe driving (Congdon 1999).

As observed by Mayhew and Simpson (1999), advanced testing may hold promise for predicting collision risk among young drivers and could, therefore, serve as a means for determining who requires remedial action or, in the case of graduated licensing, who needs to be in the system longer.

## Other Practices

A few GDL programs, all in Australia, have a high-powered vehicle restriction and a speed restriction. The rationale for both restrictions relates to the increased crash risk associated with “fast” powerful vehicles and higher speeds and the need to ensure the novice gains experience in vehicles and at speeds that provide a greater margin of safety (Drummond and Torpey 1984; Drummond and Healey 1986; VicRoads 1990). However, no research has been conducted to assess the safety benefits of a high-powered vehicle restriction. One study suggests that a speed restriction is not effective – i.e., removal of a speed restriction was not associated with an increase in crashes among novice drivers (VicRoads 1988).

Although no jurisdiction restricts the age or size of the vehicle operated by novice drivers, a few researchers have suggested that parents should be better informed about the importance of vehicle selection, both in terms of crash risk and occupant protection (Ferguson 2003; Senserrick



and Whelan 2003). This issue has been raised because research suggests that teenagers more often drive vehicles that are less safe – i.e., smaller and older. This vehicle choice can increase their crash risk as well as their chance of injury in the event of a crash (Cammisa et al. 1999; Williams et al. 1987).

The GDL program in Ontario has a highway restriction in the learner stage – e.g., no driving on expressways or freeways. This was introduced largely based on the belief that such roads are more demanding and hazardous for inexperienced drivers because of high traffic volume, mixed vehicle types, and multiple lanes. The effect of prohibiting learners from travelling on certain road types has been evaluated in Ontario. Boase and Tasca (1998) found that this restriction reduced collisions on highways by 61%.

Although not included in their GDL programs when implemented, a few U.S. jurisdictions have, or are now considering, restricting mobile phone use by teenage drivers. The National Safety Council has also endorsed a ban on cell phone use for all drivers younger than age 18. The rationale for doing so is largely based on the assumption that inexperienced drivers will be more distracted by cell phone use than experienced drivers. In this regard, Caird et al. (2004) recently conducted a meta-analysis on the results of studies on the effects of cell phones on driving behaviour and crash risk. In regards to age effects, they report there is some evidence younger drivers have a higher crash risk but this is only based on three studies, one of which found that only drivers between 25-29 years of age had a higher crash risk while using a cell phone (Lam 2002). They also report that in no study was there a significant interaction of age and cell phone use on driving performance and, that young drivers generally showed a shorter delay in response or reaction time than older drivers when cell phones were in use. In another recent study designed to better simulate real driving conditions and driving while using a phone, Shinar et al. (2005) found that the deleterious effects of conversing on the cell phone are very real initially, but may not be as severe with continued practice at the dual task, especially for drivers who are not old. They report that practice diminishes or completely eliminates the differences in driving performance between the no-distraction condition and phone use for both young and older drivers. Moreover, older drivers aged 60-71 years, in general, performed worse than the younger drivers; experienced young drivers (ages 30-33) performed better than novice young drivers (mostly 18 years of age).

The above findings from the limited research suggest that cell phones may not be especially problematic for novice drivers, compared to older drivers and that practice may diminish the negative effects of conversing on cell phones. Moreover, Ferguson (2003) has observed that many devices already exist in vehicles, such as radios and CD players, that can provide distractions to drivers and “manufacturers are incorporating additional technologies that may require interaction while driving, such as navigation devices” (p. 75). And in this regard, there is evidence from one study that young drivers aged 17-25 years were more distracted by turning the radio than in other conditions such as placing a cell phone call or carrying on a cell phone conversation (McKnight 1993). These issues need further research and evaluation before an



evidence-based recommendation can be made regarding the value of adding a cell-phone restriction to graduated licensing programs.

## Summary

Evidence that graduated licensing does have safety benefits is growing. Indeed, almost all evaluations conducted to date have reported positive benefits, with crash reductions ranging from 4% to over 60%. The magnitude of the crash reductions has varied considerably for two primary reasons. First, although jurisdictions have adopted some version of graduated driver licensing, the specific features of their programs also differ. Given the diversity of programs, it is not surprising that the magnitude of the crash reductions has also varied. Second, studies used a variety of research designs and analytic procedures to evaluate the safety effectiveness of graduated driver licensing, so findings from one study are not directly comparable to another.

Taken together, however, the consistent direction of the findings and the significant positive effects found in studies that have used sophisticated and solid research designs underscore that graduated driver licensing is an effective safety program. Importantly, the evaluations in Canada, where graduated licensing applies to all beginners, also demonstrate that safety benefits extend to novice drivers of all ages, not just young ones.

Although few evaluations have been conducted on the safety impact of specific conditions and restrictions in graduated licensing programs, there is evidence that some of them do reduce crashes. In cases where no studies have been conducted, there is at least a strong rationale that the condition or restriction should have safety benefits.

The features that can be supported based on the scientific evidence or, in the absence of research, on logical grounds include: no driving at night; zero or low BAC limits; no passengers; improved tests, including exit testing; supervision; improved driver education/training; and certified practice.

The scientific evidence argues against the use of “time discounts” for driver education/training. As well, given the limited evidence and/or lack of a compelling rationale grounds, other restrictions related to high-powered vehicles, speed, vehicle age and size, road type, and cell phone use, do not appear warranted at this time. Much more research is needed, especially to clarify the effects of distraction, such as by cell phones and other in-vehicle devices, on the driving performance and crash risk among novice drivers.



# Best Practices

Graduated licensing has been shown to be more effective in reducing crashes among new drivers than other licensing approaches. Presumably this is because it provides the opportunity for beginners to gain experience and proficiency under low risk conditions. It also addresses age-related factors by minimizing the opportunities for young beginners to engage in risky behaviours or encounter risky situations – e.g., through the use of night restrictions, low or zero BAC, and lengthy periods of supervised driving. As well, such programs insulate young beginners from risky conditions, and in doing so, allow the beneficial effects of increased maturity to be realized by delaying full licensure. Graduated licensing is also attractive because it can be tailored to address unique economic, social, geographic and political conditions within a jurisdiction. Most importantly, graduated licensing has been shown to have impressive safety benefits. In fact, Hedlund et al. (2003) has even gone so far as to suggest that no additional research is needed to justify the need for graduated licensing.

Graduated licensing systems can and do vary substantially in their operational features – e.g., in terms of the restrictions selected, how they are applied and to whom, over what period of time, what sanctions are applied to violators, and so on. This flexibility is an attractive feature of graduated licensing, because it can be tailored to the particular needs of a jurisdiction. However, in designing a graduated licensing system, it is critical that its features are true to the basic prevention principle of providing opportunities to obtain driving experience under conditions that minimize exposure to risk. In addition, the elements of the system should be based, to the extent possible, on scientific evidence and proven effectiveness.

In this regard, it is not yet clear which of the structural features of the program contribute most to the observed reductions in collisions. For example, does the empirical evidence support the need for both the lengthier learner and intermediate stage? A partial answer to this question has been provided by the findings from a few studies (Mayhew et al. 2002; Wiggins 2004) cited earlier, which found that most of the crash reductions occur during the learner stage. As well, it is not yet clear which of the many restrictions imposed on drivers during the learner and/or intermediate stages of graduated licensing are the most cost-effective – e.g., passenger restrictions, night restrictions? However, research suggests that specific restrictions typically included in programs contribute to reductions in collisions – e.g., supervision at all times, no unsupervised driving at night, zero BAC limits. Although research is lacking for other restrictions, such as certified driving practice, these measures are consistent with the rationale of graduated driver licensing.

Until further evaluations and studies are undertaken and completed, it is difficult to identify all the optimal requirements and features of GDL. However, the review of programs and scientific evidence on key features in this report provide at least some guidance for recommending best practices for GDL in Canada and that is the purpose of this report.



Importantly, a few of the GDL programs in Canada already have in place some of the best practices we recommend, and their programs have been shown to reduce collisions of novice drivers. However, no GDL program in Canada has in place all of the best practices, and, consequently, are not likely maximizing the full safety benefits of GDL. Although it is unlikely, due to political, economic and other reasons, that a jurisdiction will adopt all of the recommended best practices, hopefully they will see the potential safety benefits that can accrue through system improvements and make some important changes.

Although this report does focus on Canada, the recommendations also have relevance to countries elsewhere because no jurisdiction includes all the best practices.

A central and fundamental issue is whether GDL should apply to all novices or just those who are young. Certainly, both groups are at risk because they are inexperienced; young beginners are at even greater risk owing to the additional influence of age-related factors, such as peer pressure and thrill seeking. Accordingly, jurisdictions in Canada that have already adopted GDL programs have applied it to all beginners – this practice is to be encouraged, especially since evaluations have shown that the collision reductions from these GDL programs extend to novice drivers of all ages. For the same reasons, New Zealand, whose GDL program originally applied only to drivers under the age of 25, has extended its program to all novice drivers, regardless of age.

GDL is by definition multi-staged, and research has clearly demonstrated the safety value of this approach over more conventional ones. Accordingly, most GDL programs include a multi-stage system that has, at a minimum, a learner stage and an intermediate stage before graduation to a full licence.

## Learner Stage

The recommended best practices for the learner stage are listed in Table 5 and described briefly below.

- ❑ **Minimum entry age.** The minimum entry age should be 16, which is already the case in most GDL programs in Canada.
- ❑ **Entry requirements.** To enter the GDL program, beginners should pass a vision test and a knowledge test on the rules of the road and safe driving practices. Parental consent should be required for beginners under age 19.
- ❑ **Minimum duration.** The minimum duration should be 12 months, which is already the case in a few jurisdictions in Canada.
- ❑ **Maximum holding period.** The maximum holding period should be 24 months at which time the learner should be given a choice of remaining on the learner stage and being re-tested for knowledge, or advancing to the intermediate stage with appropriate testing.
- ❑ **Supervisory driver.** Driving should be permitted only under the supervision of a driver: who has been fully licensed for one year, is at least 25 years old, and is seated in the front seat.



- ❑ **Supervised driving.** During this critical “learning” stage, the novice should be required to have a minimum of 50 hours of practice, including 10 at night and 10 different hours in winter conditions, certified by their supervisor and/or parent.
- ❑ **Driver education and training.** Driver education and training should be available on a voluntary basis and encouraged because it appears to be the most efficient way to acquire basic operating skills as well as motivations and attitudes. Such programs also provide a means to practice and gain needed driving experience in low risk situations, under the supervision of a qualified instructor. However, until research has established the crash reduction benefits of driver education and training, it should not receive special status, such as being allowed to substitute for time in the system. Successful completion of driver education and training should not be recognized through a “time discount”, because this practice has been shown to have negative safety consequences.
- ❑ **BAC.** A zero BAC limit should apply. The supervisor should also be restricted to a low or zero BAC.
- ❑ **Night restriction.** Driving should be prohibited at night, particularly during the high risk hours of midnight to 6:00 a.m.
- ❑ **Passenger restriction.** No passengers, with the exception of the supervisor.
- ❑ **“L” sign/Plate.** The beginner should be required to display an “L” sign/plate in/on the vehicle to alert other road users of their learner status and to assist police in enforcing GDL conditions.
- ❑ **Minimum exit age.** Given that the minimum entry age is 16 and the minimum duration of this stage is 12 months, the minimum exit age should be 17.
- ❑ **Other features.** GDL programs in Canada already apply penalties, such as fines, demerit points, and suspensions/prohibitions for violations of GDL conditions, and this practice should be continued. During both the learner and intermediate stages, learners should also be subject to lower demerit point thresholds than fully licensed drivers. When licence suspensions or driving prohibitions are applied, novices should have to begin the stage again and/or the stage should be extended by the duration of the suspension – e.g., to ensure that the learner has the full amount of driving experience before progressing to the next stage. A crash- and violation-free record should be requirements for the duration of the stage to encourage learners to drive safely.

The list of recommended best practices is extensive and, as suggested previously, it is unlikely that any jurisdiction will adopt all of them. At a minimum, however, jurisdictions should adopt the following priority recommendations for the Learner Stage:

- ❑ A minimum duration of at least 12 months.
- ❑ A mandatory requirement for certified supervised practice of at least 50 hours.
- ❑ Eliminate the “time discount” for driver education.



**Table 5**

**Best Practices in the Learner Phase**

- ❑ Minimum entry age:
  - 16 years old
- ❑ Entry requirements:
  - Vision test
  - Knowledge test
  - Parental consent: yes, if under 19
- ❑ Minimum duration:
  - 12 months
- ❑ Maximum holding period:
  - 24 months
- ❑ Supervisory driver:
  - Fully licensed for one year at least 25 years or older
  - Seated in the front seat
- ❑ Minimum amount of supervised driving:
  - 50 (including 10 at night, 10 different hours in winter conditions)
- ❑ Driver education/training:
  - voluntary, segment one on basic skills
  - no time discount
- ❑ BAC:
  - Zero for novice
  - Zero BAC for supervisor
- ❑ Night restriction:
  - No driving between midnight and 6:00 a.m.
- ❑ Passenger restriction:
  - Only supervisor in front seat
- ❑ "L" sign/Plate:
  - mandatory
- ❑ Minimum exit age:
  - 17 years old
- ❑ Other Features
  - Penalties for GDL violations (e.g., fines, demerit points)
  - Lower demerit point threshold than for fully licensed drivers
  - Suspension/probation followed by return to start of stage
  - Extend stage by the duration of the suspension/prohibition



## Intermediate Stage

The best practices for the intermediate stage are listed in Table 6 and described briefly below.

- ❑ **Minimum entry age.** The minimum entry age should be 17.
- ❑ **Entry requirements.** Performance-based, “entry” test(s), including a road test, and testing in hazard perception should be used to ensure the novice has achieved the minimum standards of safe driving and serve as incentives for them to acquire the skills and experience needed to pass these tests.
- ❑ **Minimum duration.** This stage should last a minimum of 12 months and preferably 24 months, which is already the case in a few jurisdictions in Canada.
- ❑ **Maximum holding period.** The maximum holding period should be 24 months at which time the novice would be given a choice of remaining in the intermediate stage and re-doing the road test, or advancing to the full licence stage with appropriate testing.
- ❑ **BAC.** The zero BAC limit should continue in this stage. As well, when the novice is driving under supervision (e.g., during the restricted night hours), the supervisor should also have a low or zero BAC.
- ❑ **Night restriction.** Unsupervised driving would be permitted but not during riskier night hours – e.g., from 9:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. Driving to/from home and work or school or school events, and other approved purposes, could be exempt.
- ❑ **Passenger restriction.** During the first six to 12 months, for novice drivers under 20, teen passengers would not be allowed when the driver is unsupervised. After the first 6 to 12 months, teen passengers could be allowed during unsupervised driving. Immediate family members could be exempt from these restrictions.
- ❑ **“N” sign/plate.** The novice should be required to display an “N” sign/plate on/in the vehicle.
- ❑ **Driver education.** Integrating driver education and training could potentially enhance the effectiveness of GDL – e.g., basic skill-oriented course in the learner stage and a more advanced safety-oriented course in the intermediate stage. However, efforts should be made to improve the form and content of existing education and training programs because their safety benefits remain unproven.
- ❑ **Exit requirements.** Passing more advanced on-road and/or computerized exit tests that focus on higher-order skills such as hazard perception should be required to graduate to a full licence. In this regard, three jurisdictions in Canada already have an on-road exit test.
- ❑ **Minimum exit age.** The recommended minimum exit age is 19 and this is based on a minimum entry age into GDL of 16 and minimum durations of 12 months in the learner stage and 24 months in the intermediate stage.
- ❑ **Other features.** Similar to the learner stage, novices should be subject to penalties for breaching GDL conditions, a lower demit point threshold, licence suspensions/driving prohibitions followed by a return to the start of the stage, and/or an extension of the stage by the duration of the suspension/prohibition. As well, the novice should be required to maintain a crash- and violation-free record to graduate to a full licence.



**Table 6**

**Best Practices in Intermediate Stage**

- ❑ Minimum entry age:
  - 17 years old
- ❑ Entry requirements:
  - Road test
- ❑ Minimum duration:
  - 24 months
- ❑ Maximum holding period:
  - 24 months
- ❑ BAC:
  - Zero for novice
  - Zero for supervisor
- ❑ Night restriction:
  - Unsupervised driving from 9 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.
- ❑ Passenger restriction:
  - No teen passengers when driving unsupervised for novices under 20
- ❑ "N" sign/Plate:
  - mandatory
- ❑ Driver education:
  - voluntary, segment 2 on advanced safety skills
  - no time discount
- ❑ Exit requirements:
  - Enhanced on-road exit test
- ❑ Minimum exit age:
  - 19 years
- ❑ Other Features
  - Penalties for GDL violations (e.g., fines, demerit points)
  - Lower demerit point threshold than for fully licensed drivers
  - Suspension/probation followed by return to start of stage
  - Extend stage by the duration of the suspension/prohibition



Among the above best practices for the intermediate stage are the following priority recommendations that should be adopted, at a minimum, to enhance the potential safety benefits of GDL:

- ❑ No unsupervised night driving from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. (exemptions for home to work or school or school events, and other approved purposes).
- ❑ No teen passengers when driving unsupervised (for novice drivers under 20 years of age) during the first 6-months to 12-months (immediate family members exempt).

## Summary

Despite the well-documented success of GDL across North America, significant numbers of novice drivers, particularly young ones, who are protected by the program, still crash. This situation can be remedied in part by implementing the best practices highlighted in this report, and at a minimum, putting in place the priority recommendations.

Although some of the best practices are already in place in a few GDL programs in Canada, none include all the priority recommendations. The research reviewed in this report clearly suggests that implementing or enhancing GDL programs with these best practices can result in further safety benefits.





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## Appendix A

# GDL and Other Novice Driver Licensing Systems in Canada





# British Columbia

**Effective Date:** August, 1998 – modified October 6, 2003

## **Learner Phase (Class 7L)**

Minimum entry age:

- 16 years old

Entry requirements:

- Vision test: yes
- Knowledge test: yes
- Parental consent: yes, if under 19

Minimum duration:

- 12 months (can be reduced to 9 months if ICBC-approved driver education course is passed)

Maximum holding period:

- 2 years

Supervisory driver:

- 25 years or older with a valid Class 1-5 driver's license

Minimum amount of supervised driving:

- none

Driver education/training:

- voluntary

BAC:

- Zero

Night restrictions:

- No driving between midnight and 5 am

Passenger restrictions:

- Limit of 2 passengers, including supervisor

“L” sign/Plate:

- Mandatory

Road restrictions:

- none

Lower demerit points:

- 2 to 6 (discretionary – instead of 15 to 19)

Suspension/Prohibition:

- Minimum penalty for violating any of GLP restrictions is a fine of \$109. If a driver gets four penalty points (usually 2 tickets) they can be prohibited from driving for one month. More than four points could lead to a longer prohibition. Violation of the zero-blood alcohol limit is 1) an immediate 12-hour suspension and 2) a one month driving prohibition (first violation) or 3) a one year prohibition (repeat violations). Besides facing penalties that apply only to new drivers, drivers in GLP are also subject to the regular penalties that apply to all drivers. The following chart outlines BC's penalties and associated points/fines
- [http://www.icbc.com/Licensing/lic\\_fines\\_pen\\_fine\\_chart.html](http://www.icbc.com/Licensing/lic_fines_pen_fine_chart.html)

Driver improvement actions:

- **See above**

Other features:

- none

Minimum exit age:

- 16 years and 9 months



## **Novice (Intermediate) Phase (Class 7N)**

Entry requirements:

- Road test: Class 7 road test

Minimum duration:

- 24 months

Maximum holding period:

- 5 years

BAC:

- Zero

Night restrictions:

- None

Passenger restrictions:

- Limit of 1 passenger, unless accompanied by a supervisor, 25 years or older, with a valid Class 1-5 license (immediate family allowed with no supervisor)

“N” sign/Plate:

- Mandatory

Road restrictions:

- none

Lower demerit points:

- 2 to 6 (discretionary – instead of 15 to 19)

Suspension/Prohibition:

- If a driving prohibition is received, the driver goes back to the beginning of the novice stage, losing all experience time
- See above (7L)

Driver improvement actions:

- See above (7L)

Other features:

- none

Exit requirements:

- Class 5 road test

Minimum exit age:

- 18 years and 9 months



# Alberta

**Effective Date:** Since 1998 – New rules May 20, 2003

## **Learner Phase (Class 7)**

Minimum entry age:

- 14 years old

Entry requirements:

- Vision test: yes
- Knowledge test: yes
- Parental consent: yes, if under 18

Minimum duration:

- 12 months

Maximum holding period:

- none

Supervisory driver:

- Fully licensed, at least 18 years old, and seated next to the driver

Minimum amount of supervised driving:

- none

Driver education/training:

- voluntary

BAC:

- Zero

Night restrictions:

- No driving between midnight and 5 am

Passenger restrictions:

- Limited to number of working seatbelts

“L” sign/Plate:

- none

Road restrictions:

- none

Lower demerit points:

- 8 instead of 15

Suspension/Prohibition:

- Automatic-30 day suspension at 8 demerits

Driver improvement actions:

- Attend Transportation Safety Board for interview as required by driving record
- Voluntary – Defensive Driving Course (3 demerit reduction)
- Fines and demerits for GDL Condition violations (curfew, seat belts, accompanying driver)
- If charged with impaired driving, you must, depending on the Code assigned, attend one of two courses

Other features:

- none

Minimum exit age:

- 16 years old

## **Novice (Intermediate) Phase (Class 5 probationary or GDL)**

Minimum entry age:

- 16 years old

Entry requirements:



- Road test: Alberta standard road test
- Minimum duration:
- 24 months
- Maximum holding period:
- None
- BAC:
- Zero
- Night restrictions:
- None
- Passenger restrictions:
- Limited to number of working seatbelts
- “N” sign/Plate:
- none
- Road restrictions:
- none
- Lower demerit points:
- 8 instead of 15
- Suspension/Prohibition:
- 30-day suspension for Zero BAC violation
  - Last year of this phase must be suspension free
- Driver improvement actions:
- Attend Transportation Safety Board for interview as required by driving record
  - Voluntary – Defensive Driving Course (3 demerit reduction)
  - Fines and demerits for GDL Condition violations (seat belts, accompanying driver)
  - If charged with impaired driving, you must, depending on the Code assigned, attend one of two courses; complete a driver examination
- Other features:
- No upgrade to commercial class driver’s license
  - Cannot serve as an accompanying driver to a learner
- Exit requirements:
- Enhanced Class 5 road test
- Minimum exit age:
- 18 years



# Saskatchewan

**Effective Date:** September 1, 2005

## **Learner Phase (Class 7)**

Minimum entry age:

- 16 years old, or 15 years old if the applicant is enrolled in the High School Driver Education Program

Entry requirements:

- Vision test: yes
- Knowledge test: yes
- Parental consent: if under 18 years of age

Minimum duration:

- 9 months (excludes interruptions such as non-renewal, refusal, and suspension in periods)

Maximum holding period:

- none

Supervisory driver:

- Held at least a Class 5 license for 365 days (in the preceding 3 years)
- Is not a Novice 1 or 2 driver
- Occupies the front passenger seat

Minimum amount of supervised driving:

- none

Driver education/training:

- Mandatory for all new drivers
- If high school driver education, then 30 hours in-class and 6 hours in car
- If commercial driver education, then 6 hours in-class and 6 hours in car

BAC:

- Zero

Night restrictions:

- none

Passenger restrictions:

- Between the hours of midnight and 5am, the only passengers allowed are immediate family members
- Number of passengers limited to the number of seatbelts

“L” Sign/Plate:

- none

Road restrictions:

- none

Lower demerit points:

- earlier intervention than for experienced drivers

Suspension/Prohibition:

- see below

Driver improvement actions:

- Drivers in any stage who are found at-fault for a collision or who receive convictions or suspensions, will be placed in the Graduated Driver's Licensing Improvement Program
- Drivers will progress through the following steps:
  - a warning letter will be sent to the driver if the first incident (conviction) has an assigned rating of 2 points or fewer
  - if the first incident (conviction, at-fault collision, suspension) has an assigned rating of 3 to 6 points, the driver will be required to attend an education or safety seminar



- Each incident thereafter will result in the driver being required to attend further education courses followed by the administrative suspensions:
  - Defensive Driving Course
  - Driver Improvement Training – educates drivers on the responsibilities and consequences associated with driving and encourages safe driving habits
  - 30-day driver’s licence suspension
  - 90-day driver’s licence suspension
  - 180-day driver’s licence suspension
  - Interview and review

Other features:

- Cannot be a supervising driver
- Cannot obtain a commercial driver’s licence or school bus endorsement

Minimum exit age:

- none

### **Novice (Intermediate) 1 (Class 5)**

Minimum entry age:

- 16 years old

Entry requirements:

- Road test: Class 5 road test

Minimum duration:

- 6 months (excludes interruptions such as non-renewal, refusal, and suspension in periods)

Maximum holding period:

- none

BAC:

- Zero

Night restrictions:

- none

Passenger restrictions:

- One passenger only who is not an immediate family member
- Other passengers must be immediate family members and are limited to the number of seatbelts

“N” Sign/Plate:

- none

Road restrictions:

- none

Lower demerit points:

- Earlier intervention than for experienced drivers

Suspension/Prohibition:

- see below

Driver improvement actions:

- Drivers in any stage who are found at-fault for a collision or who receive convictions or suspensions, will be placed in the Graduated Driver’s Licensing Improvement Program
- Drivers will progress through the following steps:
  - a warning letter will be sent to the driver if the first incident (conviction) has an assigned rating of 2 points or fewer
  - if the first incident (conviction, at-fault collision, suspension) has an assigned rating of 3 to 6 points, the driver will be required to attend an education or safety seminar
- Each incident thereafter will result in the driver being required to attend further education courses followed by the administrative suspensions:
  - Defensive Driving Course



- Driver Improvement Training – educates drivers on the responsibilities and consequences associated with driving and encourages safe driving habits
- 30-day driver's licence suspension
- 90-day driver's licence suspension
- 180-day driver's licence suspension
- Interview and review

Other features:

- Cannot be a supervising driver
- Cannot obtain a commercial driver's licence or school bus endorsement

Exit requirements:

- none

Minimum exit age:

- 16 years and 6 months

### **Novice (Intermediate) 2 (Class 5)**

Minimum entry age:

- 16 years and 6 months

Entry requirements:

- Completion of Novice 1

Minimum duration:

- 12 months (excluding interruptions, such as non-renewal, refusal or suspension periods and must have 12 months at-fault collision, conviction and suspension free)

Maximum holding period:

- none

BAC:

- Zero

Night restrictions:

- none

Passenger restrictions:

- Limited to the number of seatbelts

"N" Sign/Plate:

- none

Road restrictions:

- none

Lower demerit points:

- Earlier intervention than for experienced drivers

Suspension/Prohibition:

- see below

Driver improvement actions:

- Drivers in any stage who are found at-fault for a collision or who receive convictions or suspensions, will be placed in the Graduated Driver's Licensing Improvement Program
- Drivers will progress through the following steps:
  - a warning letter will be sent to the driver if the first incident (conviction) has an assigned rating of 2 points or fewer
  - if the first incident (conviction, at-fault collision, suspension) has an assigned rating of 3 to 6 points, the driver will be required to attend an education or safety seminar
- Each incident thereafter will result in the driver being required to attend further education courses followed by the administrative suspensions:
  - Defensive Driving Course



- Driver Improvement Training – educates drivers on the responsibilities and consequences associated with driving and encourages safe driving habits
- 30-day driver's licence suspension
- 90-day driver's licence suspension
- 180-day driver's licence suspension
- Interview and review

Other features:

- Cannot be a supervising driver
- Cannot obtain a commercial driver's licence or school bus endorsement

Exit requirements:

- none

Minimum exit age:

- 17 years and 6 months



# Manitoba

**Effective Date:** January 1, 2003

## **Learner Phase (Class 5L)**

Minimum entry age:

- 16 years old (15.5 if enrolled in high school driver education course)

Entry requirements:

- Vision test: yes
- Knowledge test: yes
- Parental consent: yes, if under 18

Minimum duration:

- 9 months

Maximum holding period:

- No maximum time periods for Learner stage as long as licence remains valid. If licence allowed to lapse for > 4 years, then must re-write knowledge exam.

Supervisory driver:

- Fully licensed for at least 3 years, has a BAC<.05, and is seated in the front seat

Minimum amount of supervised driving:

- none

Driver education/training:

- voluntary

BAC:

- Zero

Night restrictions:

- none

Passenger restrictions:

- Limited to 1 Supervising driver in front seat, & number of working seatbelts in back seat only

“L” sign/Plate:

- none

Road restrictions:

- Not permitted to operate a Class 3 vehicle (farm truck) or off-road vehicle along or across highways

Lower demerit points:

- Driver Improvement action is initiated at a lower threshold for Novice drivers. Demerits are not used in the identification process.

Suspension/Prohibition:

- Not mandatory. Suspensions are imposed through a hearing process.

Driver improvement actions:

- Novice driver program is three tiered:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> intervention – Novice Warning letter
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> intervention – Novice Driver Course
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> intervention – Novice Driver Hearing

Other features:

- Not to take instruction in Class 1-4
- Not permitted to tow vehicles

Minimum exit age:

- 16 years and 3 months



## Novice (Intermediate) Phase (Class 5I)

### Entry requirements:

- Road test: Class 5I road test

### Minimum duration:

- 15 months

### Maximum holding period:

- *The period can be extended through driver Improvement action. Maximum extension is 200 days at a hearing. Should there be subsequent hearings a further extension can be imposed at each hearing ( max of 200 days per hearing).*

### BAC:

- Zero

### Night restrictions:

- none

### Passenger restrictions:

- From 5 am to midnight, passengers limited to 1 in the front seat and up to the number of seatbelts in the back seat and, from midnight to 5 am, either 1 passenger or supervisor in the front seat and up to number of seatbelts in the back seat

### “N” sign/Plate:

- none

### Road restrictions:

- none

### Lower demerit points:

- Driver Improvement action is initiated at a lower threshold for Novice drivers. Demerits are not used in the identification process.

### Suspension/Prohibition:

- Not mandatory. Suspensions are imposed through a hearing process.

### Driver improvement actions:

- Novice driver program is three tiered:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> intervention – Novice Warning letter
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> intervention – Novice Driver Course
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> intervention – Novice Driver Hearing

### Other features:

- May take instruction for Class 1-4 licenses if at least 18 and meets medical standards

### Exit requirements:

- - Must complete 15 months in this Stage

### Minimum exit age:

- 17 years and 6 months

## Full Stage (Class 5F)

### BAC:

- Zero for the first 12 months

### Driver improvement actions:

- Novice driver program is three tiered:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> intervention – Novice Warning letter
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> intervention – Novice Driver Course
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> intervention – Novice Driver Hearing

-

### Other features:

- May upgrade to full Class 1 -4 license if at least 18, meets medical standards, and passes appropriate tests
- May supervise after three years in full stage



# Ontario

**Effective Date:** April 1, 1994

## **Level 1 (Class G1)**

Minimum entry age:

- 16 years old

Entry requirements:

- Vision test: yes
- Knowledge test: yes
- Parental consent: No

Minimum duration:

- 12 months (can be reduced to 8 months if a ministry approved driver education course is successfully completed)

Maximum holding period:

- 5 year maximum for exiting combined G1/G2 Graduated Licensing System.

Supervisory driver:

- Fully licensed, has at least 4 years of driving experience, a BAC of < .05, and is the only other person in the front seat

Minimum amount of supervised driving:

- None

Driver education/training:

- Voluntary (12-month minimum in G1 can be reduced to 8 months if driver successfully completes ministry approved beginner driver education course)

BAC:

- Zero

Night restrictions:

- Refrain from driving between midnight and 5 am

Passenger restrictions:

- Must have experienced driver (see above) in vehicle at all times. Number of other passengers limited to the number of working seatbelts.

“L” sign/Plate:

- None

Road restrictions:

- Refrain from driving on “400-series” highways or other high-speed expressways (such as QEW, DVP)
- If licensed driving instructor is with driver, may drive on any road

Lower demerit points:

- 60 day Licence suspensions at 9 demerit points (instead of 30-day licence suspension at 15 points for fully licenced drivers)
- At 2 or more demerit points, driver sent warning letter
- At 6 demerit points, driver may have to go to interview

Suspension/Prohibition:

- Suspension of 30 days if peace officer writes a ticket for violation of license use conditions

Driver improvement actions:

- Driver sent warning letter at 2 or more demerit points
- Driver may have to go to interview at 6 demerit points

Other features:

- none

Minimum exit age:

- 16 years and 8 months



## Level 2 (Class G2)

Entry requirements:

- Road test: Class G2 road test

Minimum duration:

- 12 months

Maximum holding period:

- 5 year maximum for exiting combined G1/G2 Graduated Licensing System.

BAC:

- Zero

Night restrictions:

- none

Passenger restrictions:

- As of September 1, 2005, drivers 19 or under are prohibited from carrying more than one passenger aged 19 or under during the driver's first six months in G2, and more than three passengers aged 19 or under for the duration of the driver's time in G2 or until the driver turns 20. The restriction applies between midnight and 5 a.m. and would be waived if the G2 driver is accompanied by a driver who has been fully licenced for at least four years. Immediate family members are exempt.

"N" sign/Plate:

- None

Road restrictions:

- none

Lower demerit points:

- Same as above in G1

Suspension/Prohibition:

- 30 day licence suspension for violating the conditions set out for novice drivers

Driver improvement actions:

- Driver sent warning letter at 2 or more demerit points
- Driver may have to go to interview at 6 demerit points

Other features:

- None

Exit requirements:

- Class G road test

Minimum exit age:

- 17 years and 8 months



# Quebec

**Effective Date:** June 30, 1997

## **Learner Phase (Class 5)**

Minimum entry age:

- 16 years old

Entry requirements:

- Vision test: yes
- Knowledge test: yes
- Parental consent: yes, if under 18

Minimum duration:

- 12 months with a valid licence (can be reduced to 8 months if an approved driver education course is passed)

Maximum holding period:

- None

Supervisory driver:

- Fully licensed since two years, a BAC $\leq$ \*.08, and is seated in the passenger seat beside the driver and in a position to give assistance and advice.  
\*Not exceeding 80 milligrams of alcohol in 100 millilitres of blood.

Minimum amount of supervised driving:

- None

Driver education/training:

- Voluntary

BAC:

- Zero

Night restrictions:

- none

Passenger restrictions:

- none

"L" sign/Plate:

- none

Road restrictions:

- none

Lower demerit points:

- 4 instead of 15

Suspension/Prohibition:

- A learner's licence is suspended for 3 months following the accumulation of 4 demerit points, rather than 15 points for the driver's licence.
- Learner's licence holders are prohibited from consuming alcohol. If an offence is committed, 4 demerit points are entered on the driver's record, resulting in a 3-month licence suspension.
- Once the suspension is over, the licence is valid again but the length of the period of validity of the learner's licence is extended by 3 months.

Driver improvement actions:

- Promotion's campaigns and educational programs.

Other features:

- Can only drive Class 5 vehicles

Minimum exit age:

- 16 years and 8 months



## Novice (Intermediate) Phase (Class 5)

### Probationary licence in Québec:

The probationary licence is for drivers aged 16 to 24. It is valid for 24 months or until age 25, whichever comes first.

#### Entry requirements:

- Road test: Class 5 road test
- Parental consent: yes, if under 18

#### Minimum duration:

- 24 months **with a valid licence** or until age 25, whichever comes first.

#### Maximum holding period:

- 24 months **with a valid licence** or until age 25, whichever comes first.

#### BAC:

- Zero

#### Night restrictions:

- none

#### Passenger restrictions:

- none

▪

#### “N” sign/Plate:

- none

#### Road restrictions:

- none

#### Lower demerit points:

- 4 instead of 15

#### Suspension/Prohibition:

- A probationary licence is suspended for 3 months following the accumulation of 4 demerit points, rather than 15 points for the driver's licence.
- Probationary licence holders are prohibited from consuming alcohol. If an offence is committed, 4 demerit points are entered on the driver's record, resulting in a 3-month licence suspension.
- Once the suspension is over, the licence is valid again but the length of the period of validity of the probationary licence is extended by 3 months.

#### Driver improvement actions:

- Promotion's campaigns and educational programs.

#### Other features:

- none

#### Exit requirements:

- None

#### Minimum exit age:

- 18 years and 8 months



# Newfoundland

**Effective Date:** January 1, 1999

## **Learner Phase (Class 5 – Level I (5I))**

Minimum entry age:

- 16 years old

Entry requirements:

- Vision test: yes
- Knowledge test: yes, score 85%
- Parental consent: yes, if under 19

Minimum duration:

- 12 months (can be reduced to 8 months if an approved driver education course is passed)

Maximum holding period:

- 2 years

Supervisory driver:

- Four years of driving experience as a Class 5 driver, a BAC<.05, and is seated in the front seat adjacent to the driver

Minimum amount of supervised driving:

- none

Driver education/training:

- voluntary

BAC:

- Zero

Night restrictions:

- No driving between midnight and 5 am

Passenger restrictions:

- No passengers except supervisor (exception for parents/guardians if driver is enrolled in driver education and is accompanied by a licensed instructor)

“L” sign/Plate:

- Mandatory

Road restrictions:

- none

Lower demerit points:

- 6 instead of 12

Suspension/Prohibition:

- If suspension, must start over at first level but credit is given for driving course
- See BAC suspension details below

Driver improvement actions:

- If suspended for demerit points:
  - driver must complete a Responsible Driver’s Workshop (an 8 hour course) prior to re-instatement
  - driver must pay a \$100 re-instatement fee plus fines
- If suspended for BAC violation:
  - there is a 2 month suspension for the first occurrence, 4 months for a second, and 6 months for a third or subsequent occurrence
  - on a second occurrence, driver must complete a 4 hour alcohol education program, pay re-instatement fee and fines



- for a third or subsequent occurrence, driver must attend an alcohol rehabilitation program (up to 6 months to complete), pay re-instatement fee and fines (these are provincial sanctions unrelated to Criminal Code of Canada (CCC) charges)

Other features:

- No upgrade to commercial class vehicle

Minimum exit age:

- 16 years and 8 months

### **Novice (Intermediate) Phase (Class 5 – Level II (5II))**

Entry requirements:

- Road test: Class 5II road test

Minimum duration:

- 12 months

Maximum holding period:

- None, driver automatically upgrades to full Class 5 license after 12 months of suspension-free driving

BAC:

- Zero

Night restrictions:

- If driving between midnight and 5 am, must be accompanied by a licensed driver with at least 4 years of experience (exemption for work purposes)

Passenger restrictions:

- Limited to number of working seatbelts

“N” sign/Plate:

- none

Road restrictions:

- none

Lower demerit points:

- 6 instead of 12

Suspension/Prohibition:

- If suspension, must restart current level
- See BAC suspension details below

Driver improvement actions:

- If suspended for demerit points:
  - driver must complete a Responsible Driver’s Workshop (an 8 hour course) prior to re-instatement
  - driver must pay a \$100 re-instatement fee plus fines
- If suspended for BAC violation:
  - there is a 2 month suspension for the first occurrence, 4 months for a second, and 6 months for a third or subsequent occurrence
  - on a second occurrence, driver must complete a 4 hour alcohol education program, pay re-instatement fee and fines
  - for a third or subsequent occurrence, driver must attend an alcohol rehabilitation program (up to 6 months to complete), pay re-instatement fee and fines (these are provincial sanctions unrelated to Criminal Code of Canada (CCC) charges)

Other features:

- No upgrade to commercial class driver’s license

Exit requirements:

- None, driver automatically upgrades to full Class 5 license after 12 months of suspension-free driving

Minimum exit age:

- 17 years and 8 months



# New Brunswick

**Effective Date:** January 1, 1996

## **Learner Phase (Class 7 – Level 1)**

Minimum entry age:

- 16 years old

Entry requirements:

- Vision test: yes
- Knowledge test: yes
- Parental consent: yes, if under 18

Minimum duration:

- 12 months (can be reduced to 4 months if an approved driver education course is completed)

Maximum holding period:

- none

Supervisory driver:

- one fully licensed driver, who is seated in the front passenger seat

Minimum amount of supervised driving:

- No specified number of hours unless the Class 7 – Level 1 driver has completed a driver education course, in which case they would have a minimum of 10 hours supervised driving.

Driver education/training:

- voluntary

BAC:

- zero

Night restrictions:

- none

Passenger restrictions:

- no passengers permitted except one fully licensed driver, who is seated in the front passenger seat

“L” sign/Plate:

- none

Road restrictions:

- none

Lower demerit points:

- When a person is first licensed, they start with 4 points on their driving record and they receive an 2 additional points on the anniversary date of their first licence to a maximum of 10 points.

Suspension/Prohibition:

- 1 year suspension for zero BAC violation
- Loss of 3 points and a fine for no supervising driver or too many passengers
- 3 month suspension for loss of all points
- If a driver in the graduated driver licensing program is suspended for a period of 3 month or greater, the suspension is followed by a return to the beginning of the graduated driver licensing period with no credit given for previously passed tests or driver training course.

Driver improvement actions:

- none

Other features:

- none

Minimum exit age:

- 16 years and 4 months



## Novice (Intermediate) Phase (Class 7 – Level 2))

Entry requirements:

- successfully complete a road test

Minimum duration:

- 12 months (20 months, if you have successfully completed a driver training course and enter level 2 after 4 months).

Maximum holding period:

- 20 months

BAC:

- zero

Night restrictions:

- none

Passenger restrictions:

- none

“N” sign/Plate:

- none

Road restrictions:

- none

Lower demerit points:

- When a person is first licensed, they start with 4 points on their driving record and they receive an 2 additional points on the anniversary date of their first licence to a maximum of 10 points.

Suspension/Prohibition:

- 1 year suspension for zero BAC violation
- 3 month suspension for loss of all points
- If a driver in the graduated driver licence program is suspended for a period of 3 month or greater, the suspension is followed by a return to the beginning of the graduated driver licensing period with no credit given for previously passed tests or driver training course.

Driver improvement actions:

- none

Other features:

- none

Exit requirements:

- none

Minimum exit age:

- 18 years



# Nova Scotia

**Effective Date:** October 1, 1994

## **Learner Phase (Class 7)**

Minimum entry age:

- 16 years old

Entry requirements:

- Vision test: yes
- Knowledge test: yes – includes rules of the road and signs
- Parental consent: yes, if under 18

Minimum duration:

- 6 months (can be reduced to 3 months if an approved driver education course is passed)

Maximum holding period:

- 1 year – Learner license expires and must be renewed per entry requirements

Supervisory driver:

- Experienced driver with at least a Class 5 license
- Must have exited the GDL system and be the holder of at least a regular Class 5 license

Minimum amount of supervised driving:

- none

Driver education/training:

- voluntary – Full Driver Education/Training for reduced time requirements to obtain a driver's license is voluntary. This course may also act as an exit course from GDL. If a person does not wish to take a full driver training course, they must complete a six hour driver improvement program to exit GDL

BAC:

- Zero

Night restrictions:

- May drive after 12 am if accompanied by a Regular Status licensed driver

Passenger restrictions:

- No passengers except supervisor, who is required to be in the front seat

“L” sign/Plate:

- none

Road restrictions:

- none

Lower demerit points:

- 2 demerit points while in the Learner stage will require an interview
- 4 demerit points will implement a six month suspension

Suspension/Prohibition:

- must start the process over if given a suspension

Driver improvement actions:

- Must complete a vision, signs, rules of the road, and driving test before restoration of their driver's license. Discretionary suspensions may be implemented by the Department upon review of a driving record

Other features:

- none

Minimum exit age:

- 16 years and 3 months



## Novice (Intermediate) Phase (Class 5N)

### Entry requirements:

- Road test: Class 5N road test – Could be a Class 6N if a person only wishes to operate a motorcycle

### Minimum duration:

- 24 months

### Maximum holding period:

- Class 5N or 6N licenses are issued for a five year period with a five year expiry on birth date

### BAC:

- Zero

### Night restrictions:

- If driving between midnight and 5 am, must be accompanied by an experienced driver (may apply for exemption for employment purposes)

### Passenger restrictions:

- Limit of 1 passenger in the front seat and up to the number of seatbelts in the back

### “N” sign/Plate:

- none

### Road restrictions:

- none

### Lower demerit points:

- 4 demerit points interview implemented
- 6 demerit points suspension implemented

### Suspension/Prohibition:

- Holder must start the 24-month process over if given a suspension

### Driver improvement actions:

- Subject to driver improvement action earlier than experienced drivers

### Other features:

- Discretionary suspension action may take place upon review of a driver's record
- No upgrade beyond a Class 5 license

### Exit requirements:

- No road test
- Completion of a driver improvement course as well as 24 months in the Novice stage of GDL

### Minimum exit age:

- 18 years and 3 months



# Prince Edward Island

**Effective Date:** December 20, 2000 extended learner period (“newly licensed” driver program introduced in 1980)

## **Learner Phase (Class 7)**

Minimum entry age:

- 16 years old or 15.5 if enrolled in the Driver Education Program

Entry requirements:

- Vision test: yes
- Knowledge test: yes

Parental consent:

- yes, if under 18

Minimum duration:

- 180 days with or without driver education

Maximum holding period:

- Expires after 1 year

Supervisory driver:

- Has a valid driver’s license for at least 4 years, licensed to drive same class of vehicle that Learner is driving, and must have a BAC<.08

Minimum amount of supervised driving:

- none

Driver education/training:

- Voluntary, but those not enrolled in a driving course must take a 5-hour knowledge course for novices

BAC:

- Zero

Night restrictions:

- none

Passenger restrictions:

- No passengers, except family members

“L” sign/Plate:

- none

Road restrictions:

- none

Lower demerit points:

- 6 instead of 12

Suspension/Prohibition:

- 1 month suspension at 6 points
- May be required to start stage over or have stage extended (administrative)

Driver improvement actions:

- Warning letter issued at 3, 4 or 5 points

Other features:

- If taking a driving course and the knowledge and road test are conducted at the school, a supplementary test may be requested

Minimum exit age:

- 16 years and 6 months without driver education and 16 years with driver education

## **Intermediate Stage**

Minimum entry age:

- 16 years old



Entry requirements:

- Road test required

Parental consent:

- Yes, if under 18

Minimum duration:

- 24 months

Maximum holding period:

- none

BAC:

- Zero

Night restrictions:

- none

Passenger restrictions:

- First year – 3 passengers
- Second year – limited to number of seatbelts

“N” sign/Plate:

- none

Road restrictions:

- none

Lower demerit points:

- First year – 6 instead of 12
- Second year – 9 instead of 12

Suspension/Prohibition:

- Suspension implemented at 6 points
- Discretionary suspensions may be implemented by the Department upon review of a driving record
- May be required to start stage over or have stage extended (administrative)

Driver improvement actions:

- Driver subject to Driver Improvement Action earlier than experienced drivers

Other features:

- none

Minimum exit age:

- 18 years



# Yukon

**Effective Date:** September 11, 2000

## **Learner Phase (Class 7 – GDL Learner)**

Minimum entry age:

- 15 years old

Entry requirements:

- Vision test: yes
- Knowledge test: yes
- Parental consent: yes, if under 18

Minimum duration:

- 6 months

Maximum holding period:

- N/A

Supervisory driver:

- Have held a valid license for 2 years immediately prior to teaching the learner to drive
- The license must not be a Learner's or GDL license, and it must be for the class of vehicle the learner will be driving or a higher class of license
- Must be seated next to the driver
- Is able to take over lawful control of the vehicle

Minimum amount of supervised driving:

- 50 hours, with 10 hours in darkness and 10 hours in winter conditions (must be logged separately)
- Must complete a Declaration stating that the minimum number of driving hours were completed and the parent/guardian/co-driver who taught the learner must sign the document as well

Driver education/training:

- voluntary

BAC:

- Zero

Night restrictions:

- No driving between midnight and 5 am

Passenger restrictions:

- One passenger, in addition to the co-driver

"L" sign/Plate:

- Mandatory

Road restrictions:

- none

Lower demerit points:

- 7 instead of 15

Suspension/Prohibition:

- If any conditions of this license broken, driver receives a summary conviction ticket and, upon conviction, will be required to restart the GDL Learner stage
- If license is suspended, cancelled, or disqualified, the driver will be required to restart the GDL Learner stage
- When the Learner license is reinstated, the driver must again meet the time requirement for the Learner stage and will not be eligible to progress to the Novice stage for at least another 6 months
- If 7 or more demerit points assigned, suspension will be one month if it is the first time within a one year period that 7 points have accumulated – interview with the Registrar of motor Vehicles required for reinstatement



- If 7 or more demerit points assigned, suspension will be two months if it is the second or subsequent time the driver accumulated 7 or more demerit points within a one year period – interview with the Registrar of Motor Vehicles required for reinstatement

Driver improvement actions:

- N/A

Other features:

- May drive a vehicle that is equipped to carry no more than 7 persons, including the driver, and has registered gross vehicle weight not exceeding 4000 kg

Minimum exit age:

- 16 years

### **Novice (Intermediate) Phase (Class 5 – GDL Novice)**

Minimum entry age:

- 16 years old

Entry requirements:

- Class 5 road test
- Parental consent: yes

Minimum duration:

- 18 months

Maximum holding period:

- N/A

BAC:

- Zero

Night restrictions:

- If driving between midnight and 5 am, must be accompanied by a qualified co-driver

Passenger restrictions:

- No more than one passenger who is under 13 years old
- No combination of passengers that includes more than one passenger under 13 years old and more than one passenger who is over 12 but under 20 years old unless there is a passenger in the vehicle who is at least 20 years old and whose ability to supervise the younger passengers is not impaired by alcohol or drugs
- No more passenger than seatbelts
- No passengers in a box of a truck being operated by a novice driver

“N” sign/Plate:

- none

Road restrictions:

- none

Lower demerit points:

- 7 instead of 15

Suspension/Prohibition:

- If any conditions of this license broken, driver receives a summary conviction ticket and, upon conviction, will be required to restart the GDL Novice stage
- If license is suspended, cancelled, or disqualified, the driver will be required to restart the GDL Novice stage
- The time the GDL Novice license has been held will not be counted toward the total time required to qualify to be eligible to obtain a full privilege Class 5 or Class 6 license
- When the Novice license is reinstated, the driver must again meet the time requirement for the Novice stage and will not be eligible to progress out of the Novice stage for at least another 18 months



- If 7 or more demerit points assigned, suspension will be one month if it is the first time within a one year period that 7 points have accumulated – interview with the Registrar of Motor Vehicles required for reinstatement
- If 7 or more demerit points assigned, suspension will be two months if it is the second or subsequent time the driver accumulated 7 or more demerit points within a one year period – interview with the Registrar of Motor Vehicles required for reinstatement

Driver improvement actions:

- N/A

Other features:

- May drive a vehicle equipped to carry not more than 9 persons, including the driver, with a registered gross vehicle weight not to exceed 4000 kg

Exit requirements:

- none

Minimum exit age:

- 17 years and 6 months





# Northwest Territories

**Effective Date:** August 1, 2005

## **Learner Phase (Class 7)**

Minimum entry age:

- 15 years old

Entry requirements:

- Vision test: yes
- Knowledge test: yes
- Parental consent: no

Minimum duration:

- 12 months

Maximum holding period:

- none

Supervisory driver:

- Fully licensed driver, who has a minimum of 24 months experience with a full Class 5 licence

Minimum amount of supervised driving:

- none

Driver education/training:

- Voluntary

BAC:

- Zero

Night restrictions:

- Cannot drive between 11pm and 6am

Passenger restrictions:

- No passengers allowed other than supervisor

“L” sign/Plate:

- none

Road restrictions:

- none

Lower demerit points:

- fewer demerit points are permitted

Suspension/Prohibition:

- Subject to 30 day suspension if BAC>0
- Time spent suspended will have to be made up before moving on to the next stage

Driver improvement actions:

- none

Other features:

- none

Minimum exit age:

- 16 years old

## **Probationary (Class 5P)**

Minimum entry age:

- 16 years old

Entry requirements:

- practical road test

Minimum duration:

- 12 months



Maximum holding period:

- none

BAC:

- Zero

Night restrictions:

- none

Passenger restrictions:

- limited to number of seatbelts
- only one passenger permitted in front seat

“L” sign/Plate:

- none

Road restrictions:

- none

Lower demerit points:

- fewer demerit points are permitted

Suspension/Prohibition:

- Subject to 30 day suspension if BAC>0
- Time spent suspended will have to be made up before moving on to the next stage

Driver improvement actions:

- none

Other features:

- none

Minimum exit age:

- 17 years old



# Nunavut

**Effective Date:** Currently no GDL

## **Learner Phase (Class 7)**

Minimum entry age:

- 15 years old

Entry requirements:

- Vision test: yes
- Knowledge test: yes
- Parental consent: N/S

Minimum duration:

- 4 weeks

Maximum holding period:

- N/S

Supervisory driver:

- N/S

Minimum amount of supervised driving:

- none

Driver education/training:

- Voluntary

BAC:

- N/S

Night restrictions:

- none

Passenger restrictions:

- none

“L” sign/Plate:

- none

Road restrictions:

- none

Lower demerit points:

- none

Suspension/Prohibition:

- N/S

Driver improvement actions:

- none

Other features:

- none

Minimum exit age:

- 16 years old

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N/S means not specified





# Appendix B

## Other GDL Programs



# GDL Programs in the United States





Jurisdiction/ Evaluation	Learner Stage			Intermediate Stage Restrictions on Driving while Unsupervised			Minimum Age at Which Restrictions May Be Lifted	
	Minimum Entry Age	Mandatory Holding Period	Minimum Amount of Supervised Driving	Minimum Age	Unsupervised Driving Prohibited	Restriction on Passengers (family members excepted unless otherwise noted)	Nighttime Restriction	Passenger Restriction
Optimal provisions	16	6 mo.	30–50 hr.	16, 6 mo.	9/10 p.m.–5 a.m.	No more than 1 teenage passenger*	Until age 18	17
Alabama / F	15 <sup>1</sup>	6 mo.	30 hr. <sup>1</sup> (none with driver education)	16	Midnight–6 a.m.	No more than 3 passengers (parents and guardians excepted)	17 <sup>1</sup>	17 <sup>1</sup>
Alaska / G	14	6 mo.	40 hr., 10 of which must be at night or in inclement weather (eff. 1/1/05)	16	1 a.m.–5 a.m. (eff. 1/1/05)	First 6 mo.: No passengers (eff. 1/1/05)	16, 6 mo. (eff. 1/1/05)	16, 6 mo. (eff. 1/1/05)
Arizona / P	15, 7 mo. <sup>2</sup>	5 mo.	25 hr., 5 of which must be at night <sup>2</sup> (none with driver education)	There is no intermediate stage. The minimum license age is 16.			—	—
Arkansas / M	14	6 mo. <sup>3</sup>	None	There is no passenger or night driving restriction. The minimum license age is 16. <sup>3</sup>				
California / G	15, 6 mo. <sup>4</sup>	6 mo.	50 hr., 10 of which must be at night	16	11 p.m.–5 a.m. (eff. 1/1/06) S	First 12 mo.: No passengers younger than 20 (limited exception for immediate family) (eff. 1/1/06) S	17	17 (eff. 1/1/06)
Colorado / G	15 <sup>5</sup>	12 mo.	50 hr., 10 of which must be at night	16	Midnight–5 a.m. S	First 6 mo.: No passengers Second 6 mo.: No more than 1 passenger (eff. 7/1/05) S	17	17
	Cell phones: A driver, regardless of age, may not operate a cell phone in the learner stage (eff. 8/10/05) S							
Connecticut / G	16 <sup>6</sup>	6 mo. (4 mo. with driver education) <sup>6</sup>	up to 20 hr. <sup>6</sup> (eff. 10/1/05)	16, 4 mo. <sup>6</sup>	Midnight–5 a.m. (eff. 10/1/05)	First 3 mo.: No passengers <sup>6</sup> other than a parent if there is a supervising driver present Second 3 mo.: No passengers (family members excepted) (eff. 10/1/05)	18 (eff. 10/1/05)	16, 10 mo. <sup>6</sup> (eff. 10/1/05)
	Cell phones: A driver may not operate a cell phone in the learner or intermediate stage (eff. 10/1/05)							
Delaware / F	15, 10 mo.	6 mo. <sup>7</sup>	None	16, 4 mo. <sup>7</sup>	10 p.m.–6 a.m. <sup>7</sup>	No more than 2 passengers <sup>7</sup>	16, 10 mo.	16, 10 mo.
	Cell phones: A driver may not operate a cell phone in the learner or intermediate stage (eff. 4/14/05)							
District of Columbia / G	16	6 mo. <sup>8</sup>	40 hr. in learner's stage; 10 hr. at night in intermediate stage	16, 6 mo.	September–June: 11 p.m.–6 a.m. Su–Th, 12:01 a.m.–6 a.m. Sa–Su; July–August: 12:01 a.m.–6 a.m. <sup>8</sup>	First 6 mo.: No passengers; Thereafter, no more than 2 passengers	18 <sup>8</sup>	18
	Cell phones: A driver may not operate a cell phone in the learner stage.							
Florida <sup>9</sup> / F	15	12 mo.	50 hr., 10 of which must be at night	16	11 p.m.–6 a.m. (age 16), 1 a.m.–5 a.m. (age 17)	None	18	—

Key: G=good, F=fair, M=marginal, P=poor; S=secondary enforcement.

*continued*



Jurisdiction/ Evaluation	Learner Stage			Intermediate Stage Restrictions on Driving while Unsupervised			Minimum Age at Which Restrictions May Be Lifted	
	Minimum Entry Age	Mandatory Holding Period	Minimum Amount of Supervised Driving	Minimum Age	Unsupervised Driving Prohibited	Restriction on Passengers (family members excepted unless otherwise noted)	Nighttime Restriction	Passenger Restriction
Optimal provisions	16	6 mo.	30–50 hr.	16, 6 mo.	9/10 p.m.–5 a.m.	No more than 1 teenage passenger*	Until age 18	17
Georgia / G	15	12 mo.	40 hr., 6 of which must be at night (20 hr., 6 of which must be at night, with driver education)	16	Midnight–6 a.m. S	First 6 mo.: No passengers; thereafter, no more than 3 passengers younger than 21 S	18	18
Hawaii/ G	15, 6 mo.	6 mo. (eff. 1/9/06)	None	16	11 p.m.–5 a.m. (eff. 1/9/06)	No more than 1 passenger younger than 18 (household members excepted). (eff. 1/9/06)	17 (eff. 1/9/06)	17 (eff. 1/9/06)
Idaho / M	14, 6 mo.	4 mo.	50 hr., 10 of which must be at night	15 <sup>11</sup>	Sunset to sunrise	None	16 <sup>11</sup>	—
Illinois / F	15 <sup>12</sup>	3 mo.	25 hr.	16 <sup>12</sup>	Starts 11 p.m. Su–Th, midnight Fri–Sat, ends 6 a.m.	First 6 mo.: No more than 1 passenger younger than 20	17 <sup>12</sup>	16, 6 mo.
Cell phones: A driver may not operate a cell phone in the learner and intermediate stages.								
Indiana / F	15 <sup>13</sup>	2 mo.	None	16, 1 mo. <sup>13</sup>	11 p.m.–5 a.m. Su–F 1 a.m.–5 a.m. Sa–Su,	First 90 days: No passengers	18	16, 4 mo.
Iowa / F	14	6 mo.	20 hr., 2 of which must be at night	16 <sup>14</sup>	12:30 a.m.–5 a.m.	None	17 <sup>14</sup>	—
Kansas <sup>15</sup> / M	14	6 mo.	25 hr., in learner phase; 25 hr. before age 16; 10 of the 50 hr. must be at night	There is no intermediate stage. The minimum license age is 16.			—	—
Kentucky / M	16	6 mo.	None	There is no intermediate stage. The minimum license age is 16, 6 mo. <sup>16</sup>			—	—
Louisiana / F	15 <sup>17</sup>	6 mo.	None	16 <sup>17</sup>	11 p.m.–5 a.m. <sup>17</sup>	None	17 <sup>17</sup>	—
Maine / G	15 <sup>18</sup>	6 mo. <sup>18</sup>	35 hr., 5 of which <sup>18</sup> must be at night	16 <sup>18</sup>	Midnight–5 a.m.	First 180 days: No passengers	16, 6 mo. <sup>18</sup>	16, 6 mo. <sup>18</sup>
Cell phones: A driver may not operate a cell phone in the learner and intermediate stages.								
Maryland / G	15, 9 mo.	6 mo. (eff. 10/1/05)	60 hr., 10 of which must be at night (eff. 10/1/05)	16, 3 mo. (eff. 10/1/05)	Midnight–5 a.m. <sup>19</sup>	First 5 mo.: No passengers younger than 18 (eff. 10/1/05) S	17, 9 mo. (eff. 10/1/05)	16, 8 mo. (eff. 10/1/05)
Cell phones: A driver younger than 18 may not operate a cell phone in the learner and intermediate stages (eff. 10/1/05) S								
Massachusetts / G	16	6 mo.	12 hr.	16, 6 mo.	Midnight–5 a.m. <sup>20</sup> S	First 6 mo.: No passengers younger than 18	18	17

Key: G=good, F=fair, M=marginal, P=poor; S=secondary enforcement.

continued



Jurisdiction/ Evaluation	Learner Stage			Intermediate Stage Restrictions on Driving while Unsupervised			Minimum Age at Which Restrictions May Be Lifted	
	Minimum Entry Age	Mandatory Holding Period	Minimum Amount of Supervised Driving	Minimum Age	Unsupervised Driving Prohibited	Restriction on Passengers (family members excepted unless otherwise noted)	Nighttime Restriction	Passenger Restriction
Optimal provisions	16	6 mo.	30-50 hr.	16, 6 mo.	9/10 p.m.-5 a.m.	No more than 1 teenage passenger*	Until age 18	17
Michigan / F	14, 9 mo. <sup>21</sup>	6 mo.	50 hr., 10 of which must be at night	16 <sup>21</sup>	Midnight-5 a.m.	None	17 <sup>21</sup>	—
Minnesota / M	15 <sup>22</sup>	6 mo. <sup>22</sup>	30 hr., 10 of which must be at night	A provisional license may be granted at 16. There are no passenger or nighttime restrictions.			—	—
Cell phones: A driver may not operate a cell phone in the learner stage and in the provisional stage, which lasts for 12 mo. or until age 18 (eff. 1/1/2006)								
Mississippi / M	15	6 mo. <sup>23</sup>	None	15, 6 mo. <sup>23</sup>	10 p.m.-6 a.m. <sup>23</sup>	None	16	—
Missouri / F	15	6 mo.	20 hr.	16	1 a.m.-5 a.m.	None	18	—
Montana / M	14, 6 mo.	6 mo. (eff. 7/1/06)	50 hr., 10 of which must be at night (eff. 7/1/06)	15 <sup>24</sup>	11 p.m.-5 a.m. (eff. 7/1/06)	First 6 mo.: No more than 1 passenger younger than 18 Second 6 mo.: No more than 3 passengers younger than 18 (eff. 7/1/06)	16 (eff. 7/1/06)	16 (eff. 7/1/06)
Nebraska / M	15 <sup>25</sup>	None	50 hr. (none with driver education)	16	Midnight-6 a.m.	None	17	—
Nevada / G	15, 6 mo.	6 mo. <sup>26</sup> (eff. 10/1/05)	50 hr., eff. 10/1/05, 10 of the 50 hrs. must be at night	16 (eff. 10/1/05)	10 p.m.-5 a.m. (eff. 10/1/05) S	First 3 mo.: No passengers younger than 18 (eff. 10/1/05) S	18 (eff. 10/1/05)	16, 3 mo. (eff. 10/1/05)
New Hampshire / F	15, 6 mo. <sup>27</sup>	None	20 hr.	16	1 a.m.-5 a.m.	First 6 mo.: No more than 1 passenger younger than 25	17, 1 mo.	16, 6 mo.
New Jersey / G	16 <sup>28</sup>	6 mo. <sup>28</sup>	None	17 <sup>28</sup>	Midnight-5 a.m.	No more than 1 passenger (household members excepted)	18	18
Cell phones: A driver may not operate a cell phone in the learner and intermediate stages.								
New Mexico / M	15	6 mo.	50 hr., 10 of which must be at night	15, 6 mo.	Midnight-5 a.m.	No more than 1 passenger younger than 21	16, 6 mo. <sup>29</sup>	16, 6 mo. <sup>29</sup>
New York / G	16 <sup>30</sup>	up to 6 mo. <sup>30</sup>	20 hr.	16, 6 mo. <sup>30</sup>	9 p.m.-5 a.m.	No more than 2 passengers younger than 21 <sup>30</sup>	17 (18 without driver education) <sup>30</sup>	17 (18 without driver education) <sup>30</sup>
North Carolina / G	15	12 mo.	None	16	9 p.m.-5 a.m. <sup>31</sup>	No more than 1 passenger younger than 21 (family members exempted); if a family member younger than 21 is already a passenger then no other passengers younger than 21 who are not family members	16, 6 mo.	16, 6 mo.
North Dakota / M	14	6 mo.	None	There is no intermediate stage. The minimum license age is 16.			—	—

Key: G=good, F=fair, M=marginal, P=poor; S=secondary enforcement.

continued



Jurisdiction/ Evaluation	Learner Stage			Intermediate Stage Restrictions on Driving while Unsupervised			Minimum Age at Which Restrictions May Be Lifted	
	Minimum Entry Age	Mandatory Holding Period	Minimum Amount of Supervised Driving	Minimum Age	Unsupervised Driving Prohibited	Restriction on Passengers (family members excepted unless otherwise noted)	Nighttime Restriction	Passenger Restriction
Optimal provisions	16	6 mo.	30–50 hr.	16, 6 mo.	9/10 p.m.–5 a.m.	No more than 1 teenage passenger*	Until age 18	17
Ohio / F	15, 6 mo.	6 mo.	50 hr., 10 of which must be at night	16 <sup>32</sup>	1 a.m.–5 a.m. S	None	17 <sup>32</sup>	—
Oklahoma / G	15, 6 mo. <sup>33</sup>	6 mo.	40 hr., 10 of which must be at night (eff. 11/1/05)	16	11 p.m.–5 a.m. (eff. 11/1/05)	No more than 1 passenger (household members excepted) (eff. 11/1/05)	16, 6 mo. (17 without driver education) (eff. 11/1/05)	16, 6 mo. (17 without driver education) (eff. 11/1/05)
Oregon / G	15	6 mo.	50 hr. <sup>32</sup> (100 hr. without driver education)	16	Midnight–5 a.m.	First 6 mo.: No passengers younger than 20 Second 6 mo.: No more than 3 passengers younger than 20	17	17
Pennsylvania / G	16	6 mo.	50 hr.	16, 6 mo.	11 p.m.–5 a.m.	None	17 (18 without driver education)	—
Rhode Island / G	16 <sup>34</sup>	6 mo.	50 hr., 10 of which must be at night	16, 6 mo.	1 a.m.–5 a.m.	First 12 mo.: No more than 1 passenger younger than 21	17, 6 mo.	17, 6 mo.
South Carolina / M	15	6 mo.	40 hr., 10 of which must be at night	15, 6 mo.	6 p.m.–6 a.m. EST. <sup>35</sup> 8 p.m.–6 a.m. EDT	No more than 2 passengers younger than 21 (exceptions: family members and driving students to and from school)	16, 6 mo.	16, 6 mo.
South Dakota <sup>36</sup> / M	14	6 mo. (3 mo. with driver education)	None	14, 6 mo. (14, 3 mo. with driver education)	10 p.m.–6 a.m.	None	16	—
Tennessee / G	15	6 mo. <sup>37</sup>	50 hr., 10 of which must be at night	16	11 p.m.–6 a.m. <sup>37</sup>	No more than 1 passenger	17	17
Texas / F	15 <sup>35</sup>	6 mo.	None	16	Midnight–5 a.m. S	No more than 1 passenger younger than 21 S	16, 6 mo.	16, 6 mo.
Utah / F	15, 6 mo. <sup>30</sup>	None	40 hr., 10 of which must be at night <sup>39</sup>	16 <sup>30</sup>	Midnight–5 a.m.	First 6 mo.: No passengers S	17	16, 6 mo.
Vermont / F	15	1 yr.	40 hr., 10 of which must be at night	16	None	First 3 mo.: No passengers without exception Second 3 mo.: No passengers (family members excepted)	—	16, 6 mo.

Key: G=good, F=fair, M=marginal, P=poor; S=secondary enforcement.

*continued*



Jurisdiction/ Evaluation	Learner Stage			Intermediate Stage Restrictions on Driving while Unsupervised			Minimum Age at Which Restrictions May Be Lifted	
	Minimum Entry Age	Mandatory Holding Period	Minimum Amount of Supervised Driving	Minimum Age	Unsupervised Driving Prohibited	Restriction on Passengers (family members excepted unless otherwise noted)	Nighttime Restriction	Passenger Restriction
Optimal provisions	16	6 mo.	30–50 hr.	16, 6 mo.	9/10 p.m.–5 a.m.	No more than 1 teenage passenger*	Until age 18	17
Virginia / G	15, 6 mo.	9 mo.	40 hr., 10 of which must be at night	16, 3 mo.	Midnight–4 a.m. <sup>41</sup> S	First 12 mo.: No more than 1 passenger younger than 18; thereafter, no more than 3 passengers younger than 18 <sup>41</sup> S	18	18
Washington / G	15 <sup>42</sup>	6 mo.	50 hr., 10 of which must be at night	16	1 a.m.–5 a.m. S	First 6 mo.: No passengers younger than 20 Second 6 mo.: No more than 3 passengers younger than 20 S	17 <sup>42</sup>	17 <sup>42</sup>
West Virginia / F	15	6 mo.	30 hr. (none with driver education)	16	11 p.m.–5 a.m. <sup>43</sup>	No more than 3 passengers younger than 19 <sup>43</sup>	17	17
Wisconsin / G	15, 6 mo. <sup>44</sup>	6 mo.	30 hr., 10 of which must be at night	16	Midnight–5 a.m.	No more than 1 passenger	16, 9 mo. <sup>44</sup>	16, 9 mo. <sup>44</sup>
Wyoming / F	15	10 days	50 hr., 10 of which must be at night (eff. 9/16/05)	16	11 p.m.–5 a.m. (eff. 9/16/05)	No more than 1 passenger younger than 18 (eff. 9/16/05)	16, 6 mo. <sup>45</sup>	16, 6 mo. <sup>45</sup>

**Key: G=good, F=fair, M=marginal, P=poor; S=secondary enforcement.**

\* Passenger restrictions vary with regard to their durations, the ages of passengers to whom they apply, and the availability of exceptions. Most states have exceptions for passengers who are related to the driver or are members of the driver's household, and there are exceptions when a supervising driver is in the vehicle.

<sup>1</sup> The supervising driver in Alabama must be a parent, guardian, or driving instructor. At age 16, permit holders may drive while supervised by any licensed driver. Certification waived for applicants who have completed driver education. Restrictions end after holding the intermediate license for at least 6 months and reaching age 17.

<sup>2</sup> A driver education instructor in Arizona can authorize a student enrolled in driver education who is age 15 to drive only while supervised by the authorizing instructor. Certification waived for applicants who have completed driver education.

<sup>3</sup> In Arkansas, people age 14 can drive with an instruction permit after passing a written test; after 30 days and after passing a road test, they are eligible for a restricted license. Unsupervised driving is not permitted by holders of either the instruction permit or restricted license. The combined holding period for the permit and restricted license is 6 months. An intermediate phase for licensees younger than 18 prohibits drivers from transporting passengers who are unrestrained. Applicants for an intermediate license must be 16 and must be crash/violation free for 6 months.

<sup>4</sup> Students enrolled in driver education in California may drive while supervised by an instructor. License applicants who do not take driver education must wait until age 18 for a license. They are not required to go through an intermediate license stage.

<sup>5</sup> In Colorado, the minimum permit age varies. Fifteen-year-olds who are enrolled in driver education may apply for an instruction permit. Their supervising driver must be a parent, stepparent, grandparent, guardian, or driving instructor. A person age 15, 6 months, may apply for an instruction permit which allows driving while supervised by a parent, stepparent, grandparent, or guardian. Although driver education is not required at this age, applicants for this permit must have completed a 4-hour driver awareness program. At 16, young drivers may apply for a permit that allows driving while supervised by a licensed driver age 21 or older.

<sup>6</sup> Either driver education or home training is required for license applicants younger than 18 in Connecticut. Time spent practice driving with a professional instructor counts toward the 20 hour certification requirement.

<sup>7</sup> In Delaware, a driver education student does not need a permit to drive with a driver education instructor. After completing the on-road requirements of driver education, a driver education student who is at least age 15 years, 10 months may apply for a Driver Education Learner's Permit, which allows the student to drive while supervised by an experienced driver. Upon completion of driver education, and if the student passes both the road and written tests, the student receives a Level 1 permit that for the first 6 months allows driving only while supervised. There also is a



passenger restriction during the first 6 months of the Level 1 permit. No more than 2 passengers (family members excepted) are permitted in addition to the supervising driver. The Level 1 permit for the second 6 months is the equivalent of an intermediate license. During that period, holders may drive unsupervised between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. and may only carry 2 passengers. Applicants for a driver's license who are younger than 18 must have held a Driver Education Learner's Permit and/or a Level 1 permit for at least 12 months. Driver education is required for all license applicants younger than 18.

- <sup>8</sup> The learner's stage in the District of Columbia is mandatory for all license applicants, regardless of age. A nighttime restriction (9 p.m.–6 a.m.) applies in the learner stage. License applicants younger than 21 must go through the intermediate stage until they have completed it or until age 21.
- <sup>9</sup> In Florida, learner's permit holders may not for the first 3 months drive after sunset and thereafter may not drive after 10 p.m.
- <sup>10</sup> License applicants younger than 18 must have completed driver education in Hawaii.
- <sup>11</sup> In Idaho, license applicants younger than 17 must have completed driver education. There are three classes of learner's permits: a training instruction permit for persons 14, 6 months taking driver education; a supervised instruction permit for practice driving with a nonprofessional supervisor; and an instruction permit for persons younger than 17 who have completed driver education and supervised driving or for persons 17 and older without either driver education or supervised driving.
- <sup>12</sup> Enrollment in driver education is required for permit applicants age 15 in Illinois; without driver education, a permit applicant must be age 17, 9 months. License applicants 18 and older are not required to have driver education or to go through an intermediate license stage.
- <sup>13</sup> Driver education determines the minimum age for permits and the intermediate license in Indiana. People enrolled in or who have completed driver education must be age 15 to have a permit; otherwise, they must be age 16. The minimum age for an intermediate license is 16, 1 month with driver education; age 16, 6 months, without.
- <sup>14</sup> In addition to the certification in the learner stage, Iowa requires a certification of 10 hours of supervised driving, 2 of which must be at night during the intermediate stage. Driver education is required for an intermediate license and for an unrestricted license if applicant is younger than 18. Restrictions end after holding an intermediate license for at least 1 year and reaching age 17.
- <sup>15</sup> In Kansas, restricted license holders may not drive unless supervised other than to and from school or work via the most direct route and may not carry minor passengers other than siblings. To get a restricted license, applicants must have driven at least 25 of the 50 hours required for a full license and must have held an instruction permit for 6 months.
- <sup>16</sup> The Kentucky law prohibits learner's permit holders from driving between midnight and 6 a.m. There is no nighttime driving restriction for other license holders. License holders younger than 18 must complete a 4-hour course on safe driving within 1 year of receiving a license.
- <sup>17</sup> Driver education is required in Louisiana for a permit and an intermediate license if the applicant is younger than 17. People 17 and older must have completed an educational program that does not require a behind-the-wheel component.
- <sup>18</sup> In Maine, driver education is required for a permit and a license if the applicant is younger than 18. The learner's permit holding period and the certification of practice driving applies to license applicants younger than 21.
- <sup>19</sup> In Maryland, 15 year-olds may drive without a permit if supervised by a driver education instructor. Driver education and the certification of practice driving applies to all initial license applicants. The nighttime driving restriction, however, only applies to intermediate license holders younger than 18.
- <sup>20</sup> The night driving restriction in Massachusetts also applies to permit holders younger than 18, unless accompanied by a licensed parent or guardian. Driver education is required of license applicants younger than 18.
- <sup>21</sup> Permit applicants younger than 18 in Michigan must have completed the first segment of driver education; license applicants younger than 18 must have completed the second segment of driver education. Neither driver education nor an intermediate license is required for license applicants 18 and older.
- <sup>22</sup> In Minnesota, permit applicants younger than 18 must be enrolled in driver education; license applicants younger than 18 must have completed driver education. The permit holding period applies to license applicants 18 and older unless they have completed driver education. Provisional license holders must be crash free to qualify for a full license.
- <sup>23</sup> In Mississippi, license applicants 17 and older are exempt from the 6-month learner's permit holding period and the requirement to get an intermediate license.
- <sup>24</sup> Enrollment in or completion of driver education is required for permit applicants younger than 15 in Montana; license applicants younger than 16 must have completed driver education.
- <sup>25</sup> In Nebraska, 14 year-olds who live 1.5 miles or more from school and who either live outside or attend school outside a metropolitan area may be issued a learner's permit (called an "LPE permit") and a limited license (called a "school permit"). The LPE permit authorizes supervised driving for the purpose of preparing for the school permit, which allows driving to and from school or anyplace while supervised by a parent or guardian.
- <sup>26</sup> Until October 1, 2005, the length of the mandatory holding period depends on the applicant's age. If license applicant is 16 then mandatory holding period in learner stage is 60 days. If license applicant is 17 then mandatory holding period in learner stage is 30 days. As of October 1, 2005, driver education will be required of all licensed applicants younger than 18 unless there is no



driver education program offered within a 30-mile radius of the applicant's residence. Until then, Nevada license applicants younger than 18 must have completed driver education if the school the applicant is attending is located in a county with a population less than 50,000 or in a city or town with a population less than 25,000 and the school does not offer driver education.

<sup>27</sup> New Hampshire does not issue learner's permits. At age 15, 6 months, a person can drive while supervised by a licensed driver 25 or older.

<sup>28</sup> In New Jersey, the permit becomes an intermediate license after 6 months. The graduated licensing law applies to adults, except that the night driving and passenger restrictions are waived for new drivers 21 and older. If the applicant has not completed driver education, the minimum permit age is 17 and the minimum intermediate license age is 17, 6 months. Learner's permit holders may not drive between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. and may not carry more than 1 passenger in addition to the supervising driver.

<sup>29</sup> Permit applicants younger than 18 must be enrolled in driver education in New Mexico; license applicants younger than 18 must have completed driver education.

<sup>30</sup> Currently, New York law does not have a minimum holding period for the learner's permit. The minimum age for an unrestricted driver's license is 18 (17 if the applicant has completed driver education). The exception is New York City where driving is prohibited unless the driver is 18 or older. Effective, September 1, 2003, New York has enacted a passenger restriction that applies to permit holders and license holders younger than 18 (17 if the applicant has completed driver education). The law also created a new class of license, the limited DJ license. Permit holders who pass a road test and certify 20 or more hours of practice driving may be given a limited DJ license which allows unsupervised driving to and from school, school activities, work, medical appointments, and day care for family members. The night driving and passenger restrictions apply to this license. Permit holders may apply for the limited DJ license at any time. There is, however, a six month holding period for the regular DJ license which allows unsupervised driving anywhere but retains the night driving and passenger restrictions. For the purpose of determining if the six month holding period has passed, both the time spent in the learner's permit phase and the time a person spends in the limited DJ phase is counted.

<sup>31</sup> In North Carolina, learner's permit holders may not drive between 9 p.m. and 5 a.m. for the first 6 months. Driver education is required for permit and license applicants younger than 18.

<sup>32</sup> Driver education is required of license applicants younger than 18 in Ohio and Oregon. However, it is waived in Oregon for applicants who certify an additional 50 hours of supervised driving.

<sup>33</sup> Fifteen year-olds may drive in Oklahoma, but only while supervised by an instructor.

<sup>34</sup> Driver education is required of permit and license applicants younger than 18 in Rhode Island.

<sup>35</sup> In South Carolina, licensees in the learner stage may not drive between midnight and 6 a.m. unless supervised by a licensed parent or guardian. Fifteen year-olds who are enrolled in driver education do not need a permit to drive with an instructor. License applicants younger than 17 who have not completed driver education may not get a license to drive unsupervised after daylight.

<sup>36</sup> In South Dakota, learner's permit holders may not drive between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. unless under the supervision of their parent or guardian who is occupying a seat beside them.

<sup>37</sup> Learner's permit holders in Tennessee may not drive from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.

<sup>38</sup> In Texas, the minimum permit age is 15 for applicants who are enrolled in driver education. The minimum license age is 18 for applicants who have not completed driver education.

<sup>39</sup> Regardless of age, permit applicants in Utah must be enrolled in driver education, and license applicants must have completed driver education. Supervised driving in the learner stage may include up to 5 hours in a driving simulator. Passenger restrictions in Utah end when a driver has been licensed for 6 months or when the driver turns 18, whichever occurs first.

<sup>40</sup> Driver education is required for license applicants younger than 18 in Vermont.

<sup>41</sup> In Virginia, driver education is required for license applicants younger than 19 (18 if applicant holds a valid license from another state). Initial license applicants 19 and older must either complete driver education or hold a learner's permit at least 30 days. The night driving restriction and passenger restriction (no more than 1 passenger younger than 18) apply to learner's permit holders.

<sup>42</sup> Permit applicants in Washington must be enrolled in driver education; otherwise the minimum permit age is 15, 6 months. Driver education is required for license applicants younger than 18. Intermediate license holders with a crash or violation history are ineligible for an unrestricted license until age 18.

<sup>43</sup> In West Virginia, learner's permit holders younger than 18 may not drive 11 p.m.–5 a.m. and may not carry more than 2 passengers in addition to the supervising driver.

<sup>44</sup> Enrollment in driver education is required in Wisconsin for permit applicants younger than 18. Driver education is required for license applicants younger than 18. During the learner's stage, licensees may carry 3 passengers if supervised by a driving instructor in a dual-control vehicle or if at least 16, may carry 1 passenger 25 or older who has been licensed at least 2 years.

<sup>43</sup> In Wyoming, all applicants for an unrestricted license who are younger than 17 must have completed driver education and must have held an intermediate license for at least 6 months.





# GDL Programs in Australia





**Table A. Summary of GLS components of Australian learner permits**

Component	VIC	NSW	WA	ACT	SA	NT	QLD	TAS
Minimum age	16 years	16 years	L1: 16 years L2: No	15 years 9 months	16 years	16 years	16.5 years	16 years
Mandatory education prior to applying	No	No	L1&L2: No	Yes	No	No or yes if CBTA option	No	No
Road law knowledge test	Yes	Yes	L1: Yes L2: No	Yes	Yes	Yes or no if CBTA option	Yes	Yes
Eyesight test	Yes	Yes	L1: Yes L2: No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Practical test	No	No	L1: No L2: Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Minimum length of learner period	6 months; 3 if 25+ years old	6 months	L1+L2: No	6 months	No	6 months or no if CBTA option	6 months	6 months
Maximum length of permit; Ability to renew	10 years; renewable	3 years; must resit test	L1+L2: 1 year; renewable	2 years; must resit test	3, 6 or 9 months; renewable	1 year; must resit test	1 year; renewable	3 years; must resit test
Mandatory education and instruction	No	No	L1&L2: No	No	No or yes if CBTA option	No or yes if CBTA option	No	No
Mandatory minimum driving hours	No	50 hours	L1: No L2: 25 hours	No	No or yes if CBTA option	No or yes if CBTA option	No	50 hours
Supervisory driver minimum requirements	Full licence for 2 years; .05 BAC limit	Full licence; .05 BAC limit	L1&L2: Full licence for 4 years	Full licence	Full licence; .05 BAC limit	Full licence	1 year intermediate licence	Full licence; no suspension for 2 years
Display L-plates	Yes	Yes	L1&L2: Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
BAC limit (g/100ml)	Zero	.02	L1&L2: .02	.02	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero
Maximum speed restriction	No	80 km/h	L1&L2: 100 km/h	No	80 km/h	80 km/h except in CBTA session	No	80 km/h
Towing restriction	Yes	Yes	L1&L2: Yes	750 kg GVM	No	No	No	Yes
Freeway restrictions	No	No	L1: Yes L2: No	No	No	No	No	No

Source: Senserrick, T. and Whelan, M. 2003. Graduated Driver Licensing: *Effectiveness of Systems and Individual Components*. Wellington, Australia: Monash University Research Center.



**Table B. Summary of GLS components of Australian intermediate licences**

Component	VIC	NSW	WA	ACT	SA	NT	QLD	TAS
Minimum age	18 years	<i>P1</i> : 17 years <i>P2</i> : 18 years	17 years	17 years; 17.5 years <i>P2</i> option	16.5 years	16.5 years or 16 years if CBTA	17 years	17 years
Practical test	Yes	<i>P1</i> : Yes <i>P2</i> : No	No	Yes or CBTA	Yes or CBTA	Yes or no if CBTA option	Yes	Yes
Hazard perception test	Yes	<i>P1</i> : No <i>P2</i> : Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Knowledge test	No	<i>P1&amp;P2</i> : No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Length of intermediate licence period	3 years	<i>P1</i> : 1 year <i>P2</i> : 2 years minimum	2 years	3 years	1 year minimum	1 year	3 years if aged <23 years; 2 years if 23-24 years; 1 year if >24 years	3 years if aged <22 years; if 22-24 years hold until 25 years; 1 year if >24 years
Display <i>P</i> -plates	Yes	<i>P1&amp;P2</i> : Yes	Yes	Yes; No for <i>P2</i> option	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Transmission restriction	Yes	<i>P1</i> : Yes <i>P2</i> : No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
BAC limit (g/100ml)	Zero	<i>P1&amp;P2</i> : .02	.02	.02	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero
Maximum speed restrictions	No	<i>P1</i> : 90 km/h <i>P2</i> : 100 km/h	110 km/h	No	100 km/h	100 km/h	No	80 km/h
Towing restriction	No	<i>P1</i> : max 250 kg <i>P2</i> : No	1.5 x tail weight of vehicle	750 kg GVM	No	No	No	No
Vehicle power restriction	Yes	<i>P1&amp;P2</i> : No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Night-time restrictions	No	<i>P1&amp;P2</i> : No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Passenger restrictions	If licence disqualified in first year, one passenger only	<i>P1&amp;P2</i> : No	No	No	No	No	No	No



**Table B. (cont.) Summary of GLS components of Australian intermediate licences**

<b>Component</b>	<b>VIC</b>	<b>NSW</b>	<b>WA</b>	<b>ACT</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>NT</b>	<b>QLD</b>	<b>TAS</b>
Post-intermediate licence education	No	<i>P1&amp;P2</i> : No	No	No; Voluntary for <i>P2</i> option	No	No	No	No
Effect of suspensions on length of intermediate licence period	No	<i>P1&amp;P2</i> : No	No	No	No	No	No	If first year must start again. After first year, extended by length of suspension
Lower demerit point threshold: Length of licence suspension (or 12 months good driving record option)	5 points in 12 months: 3 months	<i>P1</i> : 4 points: 3 months <i>P2</i> : 7 points: 3 months	No	4 points: 3 months; 8 points: 3 months for <i>P2</i> option	4 points: 6 months	No	4 points in 12 months: 3 months	4 points in 12 months: 3 months
Exit test	No	<i>P1</i> : No <i>P2</i> : Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Minimum age for full licence	21 years	20 years	19 years	20 years	19 years	17.5 years or 17 years if CBTA option	20 years	20 years





# GDL Program in New Zealand

## Stage 1 – learner licence

- ◆ must be at least 15 years old;
- ◆ pass an eyesight check;
- ◆ pass a written theory test;
- ◆ must be accompanied by a supervisor who must sit in the front passenger seat – supervisor must hold and have held a current full driver licence for at least two years;
- ◆ at all times, must display “L” (learner) plates on the vehicle;
- ◆ if under 20 years old, the legal alcohol limit is 30mg/100ml of blood;
- ◆ if over 20 years old, the legal alcohol limit is 80mg/100ml of blood.

## Stage 2 – restricted licence

- ◆ held learner licence for at least six months;
- ◆ pass the restricted licence practical driving test;
- ◆ no unsupervised driving between the hours of 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. – a supervisor in the front passenger seat who must hold and have held a current full driver licence for at least two years;
- ◆ only passengers carried without a supervisor are a spouse, and/or a spouse’s dependants;
- ◆ if practical test in a car with an automatic transmission, only licensed to drive cars with automatic transmissions during the restricted phase – if supervised, can drive a manual vehicle;
- ◆ if under 20, legal alcohol limit is 30mg/100ml of blood;
- ◆ can apply for a full driver licence after 18 months on restricted licence if under 25 years of age, or after six months on restricted licence if 25 years of age or older;
- ◆ if successfully completed an approved course, the length of time on the restricted licence will be reduced to 12 months for those aged under 25 years and three months for those aged 25 or older;
- ◆ for under 25 year olds, the course must be undertaken after restricted licence held for at least six months;
- ◆ to obtain full licence, must pass the full license test.

