Driver Education Program



massDOT
Massachusetts Department of Transportation

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Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles

Preface

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The Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) has developed the following driver education program as a means of standardizing driver education throughout the state of Massachusetts. The driver education program is comprised of the Driver Education Curriculum, Driver Practicum Curriculum, the Parent/Guardian Curriculum, and a final examination. It is mandatory that the RMV program be taught in Professional Driving School Programs and Public and Private High School Programs. The aim of the new program is to ensure consistency among driver education programs by standardizing the knowledge, skills and ability of each student driver. It is the RMV's hope that driver education be a comprehensive learning experience that will lead to a reduction in the number of crashes by junior operators.

A driver education program must consist of at least 30 hours of classroom instruction. The RMV curriculum consists of 15, two-hour modules. The modules are comprised of topic matter that will provide students the skills necessary to obtain a driver's license and to become conscientious drivers. The RMV recommends that the modules be taught in the order they appear. If the instructor chooses to vary from the recommended program, the order in which the modules will be taught must be documented and made available upon request.

Each student must be taught the material contained in all 15 modules. If a student misses a class, the student must make up the module that was missed or the course hours will be considered incomplete. Material in the modules may be taught through instruction, guest speakers, textbook or video presentation. A full list of recommended supplemental materials for the program can be found in Appendix A.

A driver education program must also consist of 12 hours on-road instruction conducted by a certified driver education instructor and 6 hours of observation. A Driver Practicum Curriculum outlining the on-road skills that should be taught is found in Appendix B. Driver education instructors must be fully certified in both classroom and on-road instruction. An instructor meeting the minimum certification requirements must complete a driving instructor training program and pass a written driving instructor examination.

A final examination must be offered to students upon completion of the course. The final examination should test a student's comprehension of the topics covered in the driver's education program.

A parent/guardian driver education class must be included within the driver education program. Parents/Guardians should be educated in the content of the driver education curriculum, the junior operator law, the restrictions a junior operator license carries and the driving skills and behaviors their children should be learning throughout the driver education experience. A sample curriculum for a parent/guardian course can be found in Appendix C.

Driver Education Program Version Table

Document Version	Date
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Module 1 – Introduction to Driver's Education

Purpose

The introduction module is intended to provide an explanation of the driver's education program content and expectations. The instructor should identify the basic elements of becoming a successful driver and provide an overview of the Massachusetts driver's license and the license process.

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the students should be able to:

- Explain the structure of the driver's education program and their responsibilities for successful completion.
- List the basic driving fundamentals
- Identify the impact of decision making on driving records
- Define the Massachusetts license classes and restrictions
- Outline the procedure for obtaining a license

Measurement

- ❑ Issue a personality indicator instrument so students can identify the type of driver they might be.
- ❑ Facilitate a discussion with the students on decision-making and gauge their understanding of how decisions impact their driving.

Topic Outline

1. Student Responsibilities, Class Schedule & Syllabus
   Structure of Class, Administrative Requirements
2. Value of Taking a Driver Education Course
3. Driving Fundamentals
   A. Control
   B. Responsibility
   C. Recognition
   D. Anticipation
   E. Compensation
   F. Courtesy

4. Importance of Good Decision Making

5. Driving is a Privilege not a Right

6. Consequences of Poor Decision Making (Overview; See Module 14)

   A. Lifetime look back
   B. Out of state violation count on MA record
   C. Injury
   D. Criminal vs. civil infractions

7. License Classes and Restrictions

   A. Learner's Permit
   B. Junior Operator License (JOL)
   C. Full License

8. Overview of Road Test
   A. Specialized Features in Vehicle Not Allowed During Road Test (see "Passenger Vehicle Test Procedures" section of Chapter One of the Driver's Manual)
   B. 72 Hour Road Test Cancellation Policy
   C. Total Number of Road Tests Allowed in One Year

Module 2 – Signs, Signals and Road Markings

Purpose

This module provides basic education on the concept of the transportation system and explains the road markings that new drivers must be able to read and understand in order to apply this information to a driving situation. This module is intended to identify roadway communication tools that drivers must be able to comprehend and be responsive to.

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, students should be able to:

- List the various types of traffic signs
- Recognize the common roadway signs and explain each sign's purpose
- Identify how a driver must respond to different signals
- Explain the purpose of the roadway markings and how a safe driver adheres to the markings

Measurement

- Issue a pre-test about signs, signals, and road markings at the beginning of this module then issue a post-test at the end of this module.

Topic Outline

1. The Highway Transportation System
    - A. What is the Highway Transportation System (HTS)?
    - B. Highways and Their Design
        - Intersection with Streets and Roads
    - C. Federal & State Requirements

2. Traffic Signs
    - A. Stop and Yield Signs
    - B. Regulatory Signs
        - Action Required
        - Speed Limit Signs
        - Railroad Cross bucks
    - C. Warning Signs
        - Action Required
        - School Area Signs
        - Railroad Warning Signs
    - D. Guide Signs
        - Function of Guide Signs

Route Markers
Destination and Mileage Signs
Roadside Services Signs
Recreational Services Signs
International Signs in Use in the United States

E. Road Work Warnings

3. Traffic Signals
   A. Motor Vehicle Signals
   B. Pedestrian Signals
   C. Traffic Officer's Directions
   D. Lane-Use Lights

4. Roadway Markings
   A. White Lane Lines
      Broken, Solid, Double Solid
   B. Yellow Lane Lines
      Broken, Double: One Solid, One Broken, Double: Both Solid
   C. Arrows
   D. Bicycle
   E. Crosswalks
   F. Stop Lines
   G. Railroad Crossing

5. School Zones

6. Crossing Guard Safety (from "Crossing Guards" section of Chapter Four of the Driver's Manual)

7. Construction Zones

Module 3 – Understanding the Vehicle and Its Controls

Purpose

This module provides an orientation of the basic vehicle components and the control systems drivers must be familiar with in order to control a vehicle. The subject matter is intended to educate new drivers about the importance of understanding and effectively using vehicle components and to build routine habits necessary to being a safe driver.

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the student should be able to:

- Locate and label basic vehicle components
- Explain the importance of communication devices and its effect on driving
- Create pre-driving procedure checklist
- Define the two types of transmissions

Measurement

- Have each student create a pre-driving checklist.
- Have each student complete a vehicle survey of the components of the vehicle they will drive the most.

Topic Outline

1. Transmission Types
   A. Automatic Transmission
   B. Manual Transmission
2. Hybrid & Electric Vehicles
3. Basic Vehicle Components
   A. Control Devices
      Ignition Switch
      Selector Lever for Automatic Transmission
      Gearshift for Manual Transmission
      Clutch Pedal for Manual Transmission
      Steering Wheel
      Accelerator (Gas Pedal)
      Cruise Control
      Brake Pedal
      Parking Brake
   B. Comfort Devices

Seat-Position Controls
Steering Wheel
Air Conditioner and Heater
Air Vents

4. Visibility & Vehicle Safety
   A. Devices that Aid Visibility
      Lights
      Windshield Wipers and Washer
      Sun Visors
      Defroster (Defogger)
      Rearview and Side-View Mirrors
      Automatic Emergency Braking
      Backup Camera
      Blind Spot Warning
      Lane Departure Warning
      Telematics
   B. Restraint Systems
      Safety Belts
      Air Bags
      Head Restraints
      Door Locks
      Structural Features
   C. Anti-Theft Devices
      Ignition Buzzer
      Locks
      Alarms and Other Antitheft Devices
5. Advance Technologies: Start-Stop systems, regenerative braking, etc.

6. Instruments & Controls
   Speedometer and Odometer
   Fuel Gauge
   Alternator Gauge or Warning Light
   Temperature Gauge or Warning Light
   Oil-Pressure Gauge or Warning Light
   Brake Warning Light (ABS)
   Check Engine Light
   Other Dashboard Lights
   Tire-Pressure Monitors

7. Communication Devices
   Taillights
   Directional (Turn) Signals
   Emergency Flashers (Hazard Lights)
   Parking Lights
   Horn

8. Pre-Driving Procedure
   A. External Checks
      View the Surrounding Area
   B. Tires

      Importance of proper pressure
      Proper wear pattern
      Sufficient tread depth for safety (minimum 2/32 inch)

   C. Vehicle Body
      Exterior Lights: Headlights, Directional Lights, Brake Lights, Back-Up Lights and Tail Lights
      Exhaust System
      Fluid Levels
      Under the Hood

   D. Internal Checks
      Dashboard
      Fluid Level Alerts
      Fuel Level
      Brakes
      Types of Brakes: ABS and other brake systems
      Parking Brake
      Safety Belts
      Spare Tire & tire changing equipment
      First-Aid Kit (not required)

   E. Discussion with students about how to safely change a tire.

Module 4 – Basic Driving Skills

Purpose

This module instructs students on the basic driving skills necessary to begin driving. It is intended that students learn the proven successful methods for operating a vehicle, navigating turns, moving and stopping and incorporating the use of the necessary vehicle control and communicating devices.

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the student should be able to:

- Identify the initial steps a driver always takes as they prepare to drive.
- Demonstrate effective methods of holding a steering wheel, turning the steering wheel, and steering in reverse
- Describe how to use the various mirrors while driving and how they assist in navigation
- List the steps drivers must follow when preparing to turn or change lanes
- Explain how to control your vehicle using acceleration, deceleration and braking

Measurement

- Issue a pre-test and a post-test that addresses the key components of basic driving skills.

Topic Outline

1. Preparing to Drive

2. Starting, Moving & Stopping
    - Moving Into Traffic
        - Advance Planning
        - Visibility
        - Time
        - Space

3. Steering
    - Forward and Through Turns
        - Holding the Steering Wheel
        - Tracking and Steering
        - Steering in a Straight Line
        - Steering to Turn
        - Hand-over-hand steering
        - Push-pull-feed steering

Steering in Reverse

4. Use of Mirrors

5. Use of Headlights

6. Signaling

7. Turning Procedures
   A. Executing a Right Turn
      Preparing to Make a Right Turn
      Check for other motorists, bicyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians that may be approaching on the right. Choose the Correct Lane
      Communicate Intentions to Other Motorists (and pedestrians and bicyclists) Position the Vehicle

   B. Executing a Left Turn
      Preparing for a Left Turn
      Check for other motorists, bicyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians
      Choose the Correct Lane
      Communicate Intentions to Other Motorists (and pedestrians and bicyclists)
      Position the Vehicle

      Turning Left from a Two-Way Street onto a Two-Way Street
      Turning Left from a Two-Way Street onto a One-Way Street
      Turning Left from a One-Way Street onto a One-Way Street
      Turning Left from a One-Way Street onto a Two-Way Street

8. Backing up
   A. Straight
   B. While turning

9. Executing a Reverse in Direction
   A. Turnabouts
   B. Two-Point Turns Backing into a Driveway
   C. Heading into a driveway on the left
      Heading into a driveway on the right
      Three-Point Turns
   D. U-Turns

10. Parking the Vehicle
    A. Angle Parking and Perpendicular Parking
       Right-or-Left-Angle Parking (show illustrations)
       Perpendicular Parking (show illustrations)
    B. Exiting an Angled or a Perpendicular Parking Space
    C. Parallel Parking

D. Parking in Other Areas
- Parking in a driveway
- Parking in a garage
- Parking on a hill
- Parking downhill with a curb
- Parking downhill without a curb
- Parking uphill with a curb
- Parking uphill without a curb
- Restrictions on parking

11. Changing Lanes
    A. The Safest Way to Change
    - Lanes Advance Planning
    - Visibility
    - Scanning Time
    - Space
    - Making the Change

12. Passing
    A. Decision making process
    - Road Signs and Pavement Markings
    - Weather Conditions
    - Relative Speeds of the Two Vehicles

    B. Passing Another Vehicle
    C. Being Passed

13. Acceleration and Braking
    A. Acceleration, Deceleration, and Speed
    - Acceleration and Deceleration Rates Vary
    - Maintaining a Constant Speed
    - Monitoring Your Speed

14. Green Driving Tips (From Chapter Six of Driver's Manual)

Module 5 – Rules of the Road

Purpose

This module is intended to teach students about the rules of the road and the proper observation of these rules. The students have accumulated knowledge of driving through observation of family and friends, and it is important that they understand their responsibilities to effectively obey rules of the road, even the commonly ignored ones.

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the students should be able to:

- Identify the different types of speed limits and how they relate to the basic speed laws
- Explain what rotaries and roundabouts are and describe how to drive in single lane rotaries, multiple lane rotaries and roundabouts and how to pass in these situations
- Define right of way and the right of way rules for all users of the road including vehicles, pedestrians, motorcyclists and bicyclists
- Provide examples of how to judge time and distance and how this relates to negotiating intersections and passing

Measurement

- Provide diagrams about intersections, roundabouts, rotaries and right of way scenarios and have the students label them appropriately depending on the road situation.
- Test student's memory of the different types of speed limits and related speed laws.
- Provide a multiple-choice test about basic operating laws of Massachusetts.

Topic Outline

1. Basic Operating Laws of Massachusetts
    - Understanding the Law
    - Getting a Driver's License
    - Violations and the Point System
    - Certificate of Title
    - Vehicle Registration
    - Insurance
    - Inspection Sticker

2. Speed Limits
    A. Discuss the different types of Speed Limits
        Fixed Speed Limits
        Advisory Speed Limits
        Day and Night Speed Limits
    B. What Are Basic Speed Laws

3. Negotiating Intersections
    A. Controlled Intersections
    B. Uncontrolled Intersections

4. Railroad Crossings
    Safely Crossing a Railroad
        Determining When It is Safe to Cross
        Staying Alert
        Do Not Panic If the Vehicle Stalls
    Winter-Time Railroad Crossings
        Road Salt and Railroad Crossings

5. Rotaries and Roundabouts
    Describe the use of rotaries
    Single-Lane Rotaries
    Multiple Lane Rotaries
    Quarter-Turn
    Continue Straight Ahead
    Three-Quarter Turn
    U-Turn
    Roundabouts
    Rules for Passing, including Passing on the Left, Passing on the Right, and Being Passed.

6. Determining the Right of Way
    A. What is Right-of-Way?
    B. When Should You Yield the Right-of-Way?
    C. Discuss the Right-of-Way Rules for:
        Pedestrians
        Funeral Processions (supplement this section based on new material in Chapter Four of the Driver's Manual)
        Intersections Not Controlled by Signs or Signals
        Four-Way Stops
        Turning Left
        Private Roads, Driveways and Unpaved Roads
        Throughways
        Intersection of Single, Two-Lane and Multiple-Lane Roads, and Rotary

7. Safe Driver Law
    A. Mobile Phones
    B. Texting
    C. Three Surchargeable Events in Two Years Suspension

8. Emergency Vehicles "Move Over" Law

Module 6 – Making Safe Driving Decisions

Purpose

This module teaches new drivers important strategies and practices they must know and use each time they drive so that they are a safe driver at all times. This section also educates new drivers about how to identify aggressive drivers and their behaviors so that they can start to be aware of what to do when confronted with an aggressive driver.

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the students should be able to:

- Define the SIPDE concept and explain how it relates to driving
- Define the Smith system and explain how it relates to driving
- Identify five safe driving habits
- Explain the purpose of seatbelts and discuss the consequence of not wearing a seatbelt
- List five behaviors of aggressive drivers and what you should do as a driver if confronted by this type of driver

Measurement

- Have students demonstrate through skits how to apply the SIDPE and SMITH systems.
- Have students record in their observation journals five examples each of safe and unsafe driving practices they have observed with friends or family. Students should share these observations with the class.

Topic Outline

1. Understanding and Applying the SIPDE/IPDE Process

   Discuss the SIPDE concept and how does it relates to driving?

   SEARCH
   IDENTIFY
   PREDICT
   DECIDE

EXECUTE

Discuss the application of the **SIPDE** Process.

2. Understanding and Applying the Smith System

A, What is the Smith System, and how does it relate to driving?
Aim High and Look Ahead, Not Down
Keep Your Eyes Moving
Get the Big Picture
Make Sure Others See You
Leave Yourself a Way Out or a Margin of Safety

3. Safe Driving Habits (Practices)
A. ADAS (Advanced Driver Assistance Systems), benefits & risks

4. Seatbelts

5. Passenger Vehicle Safety

6. Aggressive Driving

A. Aggressive Driving in Massachusetts
B. How to Identify Aggressive Drivers
Aggressive Drivers typically exhibit several of the following tendencies:
Cutting people off
Exceed the speed limit
Switch lanes without signaling
Tailgate (follow too closely)
Run red lights
Prevent other motorists from passing them
C. What to do When Confronted by an Aggressive Driver
Attempt to get out of his or her way
Do not challenge them
Avoid eye contact
Ignore obscene gestures
Wear your safety belt, it will help keep you in control of your vehicle and protect you in the event of a crash
Control your anger and do not let the situation escalate
Do not underestimate the other driver's potential for aggression
To report an aggressive driver to police, call 911

7. Road Rage
Criminal Consequences

Module 7 – Sharing the Road

Purpose

This module educates students about sharing the road with users other than vehicles such as pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists. The intention is to provide information about safe ways to share the road and drive with other roadway users as well as unexpected changes.

Objectives

- Identify the other users of the road and explain how to interact safely
- Explain the unique situations encountered with commercial vehicles and how to drive through them safely
- Recognize the different school bus and 7D vehicle signals and explain how a driver must react to those signals

Measurement

- Have students take a pre-test and post-test regarding important aspects of sharing the road and the responsibilities of pedestrians, motorcyclists, bicyclists and drivers.
- Quiz students on the appropriate driver responses to school buses, 7D vehicles, and emergency vehicles.

Topic Outline

1. Pedestrians

   A. Pedestrians Pose Problems for Drivers
      Jaywalking
      Children
      Adults
   B. Avoiding Collisions With Pedestrians
   C. Responsibilities Pedestrians Have
   D. White canes and guide dogs should be associated with visually impaired individuals. Drivers should use increased caution when driving in the proximity to a potentially visually impaired individual.

2. Vulnerable Users Law: https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2022/Chapter358

   A. Massachusetts law defines ‘vulnerable users’ as:
   - Pedestrians
   - Roadside workers
   - Bicyclists

- People riding horses or horse drawn carriages
- People using:
- Wheelchairs
- Personal mobility devices
- Motorized bicycles
- Motorized scooters
- Non-motorized scooters
- Skateboards
- Roller skates

When you pass a vulnerable user, you must leave a safe passing distance of **at least four feet** between your vehicle and the road user. If it is safe, you may use all or part of the lane next to you and you may cross the center line if necessary. You must obey the speed limit while passing.

'MOTORISTS GIVE 4 FT TO PASS' sign to the will be posted on roads that do not have designated bike lanes or separate paths.

B. Motorcyclists

3. Bicyclists, Mopeds & Scooters
   A. Recognizing and Reducing the Risk of Problems Caused by Cyclists
      Watching Out for Cyclists
      Dangerous Roadway Conditions
      Lack of Protection
      Failure to Obey Traffic Laws
      Irresponsible Drivers
      What Special Responsibilities do Bicyclists Have?
      Bicycle Safety Law
   B. What Special Responsibilities Do Motorcyclists Have?

4. Interacting with Commercial Motor Vehicles
   A. Safely Sharing the Road with Other Vehicles
      Trucks and Tractor-Trailers
      Visibility
      Time
      Space
      Buses
      Small Cars
      Other Kinds of Vehicles
      Emergency Vehicles
      Snowmobiles (Not allowed to travel along road in Massachusetts)
      Sport Utility Vehicles
      Ice Cream Trucks
      Maintenance Vehicles
   B. Dealing With Slow-Moving Vehicles

5. School buses and 7D (School Pupil Transport) vehicles

6. Emergency Vehicles and Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

7. Animals
    A. Avoid Collisions With Animals
        Small Animals/Large Animals
        Using **SIPDE** to Avoid Collisions with Animals
    B. Horse drawn carriages and vehicles

Module 8 – How Natural Laws Effect Driving

Purpose

This module teaches students that in addition to employing safe driving habits it is also important to understand how natural law effects driving and how to counteract the result of natural laws. This module begins the development of advanced driving skills needed to navigate certain driving situations.

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the students should be able to:

- Define natural laws and explain their impact on driving and a driver
- List the types of skids and the suggested solutions for controlling or regaining control of the vehicle
- Identify the stopping distance needed in various driving situations
- Explain how speed control and knowledge of natural laws can help avoid a collision
- Provide examples of the impact of collisions

Measurement

- Have students complete a post-test that contains driving scenarios learned in this module and have them provide the answer based on applying what they learned in this module. It should include:
  - Scenarios about stopping distance
  - Scenarios about steering in different skid situations and how to regain control
  - List examples of natural law

Topic Outline

1. Natural Laws and the Movement of Vehicles
   - A. What Are Natural Laws?
     - Inertia
     - Friction
     - Tire Pressure
     - Tire Condition
     - Rain
     - Ice and snow
     - Road Condition
     - Momentum

Kinetic Energy
Acceleration
Braking
Gravity
Center of Gravity

2. Steering and Braking
    A. Factors and Natural Laws Affecting Steering
    B. Natural Laws Affecting Steering Around a Curve
    C. How Gravity and the Contour of the Road Affect Steering
        Banked Roads
        Crowned Roads

    D. How Natural Laws Influence Braking Distance
        Factors Affecting Braking Distance
        Speed
        Condition of the vehicle
        Condition of the road
        Hills and mountains

3. Controlling Skids
    A. What Can Make A Vehicle Skid?
        Reduced Traction
        Changing Speed Too Quickly
        Changing Direction Too Quickly
        Understeering and Oversteering
    B. Kinds of Skids
        Review Causes and Corrections for Specific Skid Types
        A braking skid
        A power skid
        A cornering skid
        A blowout skid
        Responding to a skid

4. Impact and Restraint Systems

5. ABS and how they differ from other braking systems

6. Gravity and Energy of Motion

7. Friction and Traction

8. Stopping Distances
    A. Using Speed Control to Avoid a Collision
        Accelerating
        Braking
    B. How Knowledge of Natural Laws Can Help to Avoid a Collision
        Steering to Avoid a Collision
        Controlled Off-Road Recovery
    C. How to Minimize the Risk and Consequences of a Collision
        Force of Impact

- Speed of the vehicle
- Weight of the vehicle
- Impact distance
- Reducing the Force of Impact
- Sand Canisters
- Vehicle Features

D. Unavoidable Collisions
- Head-on
- Side

Module 9 – Different Driving Environments

Purpose

This module alerts students to different driving environments and is intended to teach them how to navigate various challenges like changing lanes, driving in urban versus rural areas, driving on hills, mountains and highways, and exiting and entering.

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the students should be able to:

- Describe how to manage visibility, time and space in urban, rural, and highway driving
- List the steps to follow when changing lanes
- Explain how to behave when being passed and what to do when passing and being passed.
- Identify the special situations drivers face when driving on a highway and how to enter and exit a highway

Measurement

- Have students take a pre-test and post-test about the various skills they must gain for different driving situations.

Topic Outline

Different driving environments require different considerations.

1. Managing Visibility, Time & Space

Managing Visibility
- Advance Preparations
- Behind-the-Wheel Actions

Managing Time

Managing Space
- Considering Time, Distance and Speed
- Assessing and Adjusting the Space Around the Vehicle
- Adjusting the following distance as needed
- Keeping a three-second distance between vehicles.
- Whenever possible, try to keep as much as 8 feet on either side of you.
- If there is insufficient space ahead, behind, or to the side of your vehicle, take prompt action to increase the space.

Response Time When Distracted
- Cell
- Text

2. Changing Lanes

3. Urban Driving

Special Factors Affecting City Driving
- Traffic Density
- Numbers of Pedestrians
- Intersections
- Slow or Irregular Traffic Flow
- Lower Speed Limits
- Sight Obstructions
- Potholes and Other Road Defects

Managing Visibility, Time and Space in City Driving?
- Discuss Managing Visibility in the City
- Discuss Managing Time in the City
- Discuss Managing Space in the City

4. Following and Meeting Traffic

5. Techniques for Driving in Traffic

6. Rural Driving

Special Factors Affecting Driving on Rural Roads
- Road Conditions
- Higher Speed, Fewer Controls
- Slow-Moving Vehicles
- Sight Obstructions
- Animals and Objects on the Roads

Managing Visibility, Time and Space in Rural Driving
- Discuss Managing Visibility in Rural Areas
- Discuss Managing Time in Rural Areas
- Discuss Managing Space in Rural Areas

7. Passing or Being Passed on Rural Roads

8. Traveling on Hills or Mountains

Driving Uphill and Downhill
- Driving Uphill
- Automatic transmission
- Manual transmission
- Driving Downhill
- Automatic transmission
- Manual transmission

Driving in the Mountains
- Special Roadway and Traffic Problems
- Effects of Weather and Altitude

Driving Up a Mountain
Driving Down a Mountain

9. Highway Driving

Special Factors Affecting Driving on Multiple-Lane Highways
Higher Speed Limits
Limited Entrances and Exits
Frequent Passing
Trucks and Other Large Vehicles
Managing Visibility, Time and Space on Multiple-Lane Highways
Discuss Managing Visibility on Highways
Discuss Managing Time on Highways
Discuss Managing Space on Highways

10. Entering, Driving on, or Exiting Highways

11. Passing or Being Passed on the highway

12. Dealing with Stop and Go Traffic

13. Driving Through Tunnels (from "Driving Emergencies" section of Chapter Five of the Driver's Manual)

Module 10 – Driving in All Weather Conditions

Purpose

This module will teach students about the effects of weather conditions on driving and how to compensate for less than desirable conditions. It also suggests the best driving practices to account for these sometimes very difficult situations.

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the students should be able to:

- Identify five conditions that affect driving
- Describe how to drive safely when light is low and when there is glare from the sun
- List the steps you should follow to manage visibility, time, and space in rain and snow
- Explain how to anticipate and prevent skids and hydroplaning

Measurement

- Have students complete a pretest and post-test about all weather conditions.
- Have students list safe driving strategies for driving in sun glare, wind, fog, rain and snow.

Topic Outline

Different driving environments require different considerations.

1. Reduced Visibility

2. Low Light and Night Driving

    Low Light Conditions Affect Visibility
    Driving Safely When the Amount of Light is Low
        During Dusk and Dawn Hours
        At Night
        Using low beams and high beams correctly.
        Overdriving headlights.
        Looking beyond headlights

3. Visibility, Bright Light and Glare

    Conditions Creating Glare from the Sun

Driving Safely in the Glare from the Sun

4. Reduced Traction

5. Judging Time and Distance

A. Minimizing Risk on Different Surface Conditions Snow
   Ice
   Rain
   Gravel
   Sand
   Leaves – In addition, discuss dangers of driving into a leaf pile as it may make children or objects less visible.

B. Managing Visibility, Time and Space Preparing in advance.
   Allowing for extra margin of safety.
   Driving in the tracks of the vehicle ahead on a wet pavement.
   Giving other drivers plenty of advance notice.
   Staying alert.
   Keeping low-beam headlights on
   Easing the way into turns and curves
   Anticipating and Preventing Skids.
   Anticipating and Preventing Hydroplaning

C. Keeping a Safe Following Distance
   Using the 2-second rule (See Driver's Manual)

D. Other Hazardous Weather Conditions
   Minimizing Risks in Other Hazardous Weather
   Conditions Fog or Smog
   Sand and Dust
   Wind

Module 11 – Mental and Physical Effects on Driving

Purpose

This module alerts new drivers that their personal mental and physical condition impacts their driving skills. The intent is to describe how changes in emotions and physical conditions can affect driving skills and may cause them to drive unsafely.

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the students should be able to:

- List the ways emotions affect your driving
- Explain the relationship between vision and ability to drive
- Describe how fatigue, long term and short-term illnesses affect your driving skills
- Identify four driving distractions and how they affect your driving ability

Measurement

- Provide 10 scenarios related to Mental and Physical conditions effecting driving and have students create the solution to address the problem. The problem could be making a decision to drive or not and what to do if it were to occur while he/she was driving.

Topic Outline

1. Emotions and the Ability to Drive
    - A. How Emotions Affect Your Driving
      Inattention
        - Lack of Concentration
        - Emotional Stress
        - Ability to Process Information
        - Aggressive Driving
    - B. How to Control Your Emotions
      Maintaining a Responsible Attitude
        - Avoid Triggering Aggressive Driving
        - Identify Troublesome Situations
        - Plan Ahead
        - Expect Mistakes from Others
        - Don't Drive When Upset or Depressed
        - Don't Give in to Negative Peer Pressure

2. How Vision Effects the Ability to Drive
    A. Good Vision is Critical to Driving Ability Field of Vision
    B. How to Compensate for Vision Problems Poor Depth Perception
        Contrast Sensitivity Color
        Blindness Night Blindness

3. Physical Condition and the Ability to Drive
    A. How Short-Term Illnesses or Injuries Affect Driving How
    B. Long-Term Physical Factors Affect Driving
        Hearing Loss Can Affect Driving Ability Challenges
        Caused by Physical Factors
        Aging and Chronic Illnesses Affect Driving Ability

4. Fatigue
    A. How Fatigue Affects Driving Ability
    B. B. How Drowsiness Causes Accidents

5. Distractions
    A. In-Car Distractions and the Effects on Driving
    Out of Car Distractions (e.g. animals)
    B. How Distractions Hinder Driving
    Ability
        Vehicle Audio Systems
        Headphones
            [Note: The use of headphones while operating a motor vehicle in Massachusetts is illegal unless such headphones are used for controlling the course of movement of the said vehicle. See M.G.L. Chapter 90, Section 13.]
        Cellular Phones
            Include impact of new cell phone and texting laws
        Passengers
        Televisions
            [Note: A television forward of the back of the front seat is illegal in Massachusetts.]
        Other Distractions

Module 12 – The Dangers and Consequences of Alcohol, Drugs & Driving

Purpose

This module is intended to teach students about the physical and mental affects alcohol and drugs have on driving skills and the consequences the penalties can have on their life. The loss of license for a period of time is probably the most socially problematic issues for them but in actuality it will also be a substantial financial burden. It is intended to educate them about the science of reduced coordination, reaction time, vision, and decision-making due to substances in the body. This should be used as an opportunity to educate new drivers about the proven scientific research regarding the effects of alcohol, medicines and other drugs on driving skills.

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the students should be able to:

- Describe the physical effects of alcohol and drugs and the impact on driving skills
- Identify the myths and facts of alcohol and drugs
- List the individual's responsibilities regarding drinking and drugged driving
- State the Massachusetts laws related to BAC, implied consent, and ignition interlock device
- Explain the drunk driving penalties in Massachusetts and the consequences to driving privileges
- Describe what will happen when a driver is stopped for alleged driving under the influence
- Identify the types of drugs that affect driving ability and how they affect driving ability

Measurement

- Have students complete an effects of alcohol and drugs pre-test and then a post-test.
- Have students read about recent alcohol and drugged driving related accidents and have them identify which elements of safe driving may have failed and thus caused the accident.

Topic Outline

Alcohol and the Effects on Driving

The Effects of Alcohol and Drugged Driving

The Individual's Responsibilities Regarding alcohol and drug use.

Signs of an Impaired Driver

Affect on Driving Ability

Facts about Alcohol, Drugs and Driving

Myths and Facts about Alcohol and Drugs

Physical Effects of Alcohol and Drugs

Coordination and Reaction Times

Vision, Depth and Distance Perception

Speed Perception

Mental Effects of Alcohol and Drugs

1. Laws Governing Alcohol and Drug Use
   - Melanie's Law
     i. Increased Drunk Driving Penalties
     ii. Ignition Interlock Devices
   - Implied Consent Law
   - Chemical Test Refusal
   - Penalties and Consequences

2. BATS (Breath Alcohol Test)

3. Chemical Test Refusal (CTR) and its consequences

4. Drugs and the Effects on Driving

   The Types of Drugs that Affect Driving Ability
   The Dangers of Combining Drugs **(SYNERGISM)**
   Over-the-Counter Drugs
   Prescription Drugs
   Depressants
   Stimulants
   Hallucinogens
   Marijuana
   LSD and PCP
   Narcotics

5. Clarification that Operating a Motor Vehicle While Under the Influence of Marijuana is Still Illegal (from the "Illegal Drugs, Medicine, and Other Controlled Substances" section of Chapter Three of the Driver's Manual)

Module 13 – Distracted Driving

Purpose

This module informs new drivers about the existing laws regarding mobile phone use and texting while driving and educates new drivers about the dangers of distracted driving. The intent is to provide an overview of driver distractions to be aware of, along with a variety of strategies to avoid becoming distracted while behind the wheel.

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the students should be able to:

- List the various driver distractions (inside and outside of the vehicle)
- Identify the distracted driving laws in Massachusetts
- Describe how distracted driving impacts the driver's ability to react to their environment
- Describe how the emotional/physical state of the driver can become a distraction
- Identify 3 strategies that will help the driver to avoid becoming distracted

Measurement

- Provide 10 scenarios related to Distracted Driving and instruct students to: 1) identify all potential distractions within; and 2) identify strategies to avoid the distractions.

Topic Outline

1. Safe Driver Law
   A. Mobile Phones
   B. Texting
   C. Three Surchargeable Events in Two Years = Suspension of License

2. Response Time When Distracted
   A. Cell Phone
   B. Texting

3. Mental/Physical Effects on Driving
   A. How Emotions Affect Driving
      Inattention
      Lack of Concentration
      Emotional Stress
      Ability to Process Information
   B. Fatigue
      How Fatigue Affects Driving Ability
      How Drowsiness Causes Crashes

4. Driver Distractions
   A. In Car Distractions and their Effects on Driving
      Vehicle audio systems
      Headphones (Note: The use of headphones while operating a motor vehicle in Massachusetts is illegal unless such headphones are used for controlling the course of movement of the said vehicle. See M.G.L. Chapter 90, Section 13.)
      Cellular phones (include impact of new cell phone and texting laws)
      GPS or navigation system
      Passengers
      Grooming
      Eating, drinking or smoking
      Attending to children or pets
      Reading maps or other literature
      Televisions (Note: A television forward of the back of the front seat is illegal in Massachusetts.)

   B. Distractions Outside of the Car
      Outside traffic/vehicle
      Police pulling someone over
      Sunlight/sunset
      People/objects in the roadway
      Crash scene
      Road construction
      Reading billboards or other advertisements

   C. How Distractions Hinder Driving Ability

5. Safe Driving Habits
   A. Strategies for Avoiding Distraction

Module 14 – Consequences of Unsafe Driving and Poor Decision Making

Purpose

This module is intended to teach new drivers that decision-making plays a key role in being a good driver in addition to fostering good driving skills. It is important to realize that poor decisions could severely impact the driver's life; the passengers' lives and the lives of families and friends if an accident were to occur. These decisions may also cause an emotional and a financial toll that may have a long-lasting impact.

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the students should be able to:

- Identify examples of bad decisions effecting driving caused by social pressures
- Explain what happens in a crash and the physical and emotional impact
- Describe how driving records, suspensions, and lifetime look back influence your operator's insurance cost
- Provide examples of which type of drivers are most at risk for crashes

Measurement

- Have students complete another personality type indicator that also asks them to reflect on decision-making and its impact on driving.

Topic Outline

1. Social Pressures & Driving
   - Speeding
   - Drag Racing
   - No Seat Belts
2. Types of Crashes
3. Hit and Run Crashes (from "Traffic Crashes" section of Chapter Five of the Driver's Manual)
4. Collisions
5. Physical & Emotional Effects to Yourself & Others
6. Brain Injury
7. Crash Statistics
8. Lifetime Look back
9. Driving Record & Suspensions
   - Suspensions for Surchargeable Events and Speeding Violations
10. Types of Insurance coverage offered
11. Discuss how insurance is affected by a crash

Module 15 – Handling Emergencies and Breakdowns, Final Review

Purpose

This module is intended to teach new drivers about common vehicle malfunctions and roadway hazards. It is also intended to demonstrate how a safe driver, using good decision-making skills, handles each situation along with the steps they should follow if ever in a vehicle accident.

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the students should be able to:

- Identify common vehicle malfunctions and the proper way to address them
- List possible roadway hazards and how to use good decision making and driving skills to navigate the situation
- Explain the steps to follow if involved in a vehicle accident
- Complete an accident report

Part I: Handling Emergencies and Breakdowns

1. Vehicle Malfunctions
2. Roadway Hazards
3. What you should do if you are in a crash:
   If possible Stop Immediately
   Warn Others If Possible
   Call for Medical Help, if necessary Call the Police
   Exchange Information
   Get Names and Addresses of Witnesses Stay at the Scene
   Make Accident Reports (If Required) See a Doctor (If You Have Been Injured)

4. What you should do when stopped by a Police Officer:
   Pull safely to the side of the road
   Have your license and registration available

5. Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness
   How to become an organ donor (under 18 years of age requires parental consent) New Organ and Tissue Donor Registration Fund

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Part II: Final Examination/Final Review

Purpose

Final Exam: To test the students' knowledge of the material taught throughout the Driver Education Program. Final Review: The final review is an opportunity to conduct a comprehensive review of what students have learned in the classroom. The activities used in the final review should provide the instructor with important information regarding which students have mastered the knowledge and skills and which students need more educational support.

The exam must consist of a minimum of fifty (50) questions. At least thirty (30) percent of the questions shall pertain to the rules of the road. The remaining questions are subject to the discretion of the driving school. A passing grade of eighty (80) percent must be obtained.

Method

The final review should include a variety of different activities that address the different learning styles present in the classroom.

Driver's Education
Supplemental Materials

Revised 08/2024 **Appendix A**

Introduction

The Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) has compiled the following list of educational materials that may be used to supplement the required modules. The RMV recommends the use of additional learning tools in addition to instructor-led lecture in order to enhance the learning process and keep the student driver's attention.

Recommended materials

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Driver's
Manual A driver's education textbook
Videos applicable to the topics in each module
Videos should be followed by a discussion of the subject matter and a question and answer period.
Guest Speakers
Diagrams
Daily Newspaper clippings
RMV Website: mass.gov/rmv

It is also suggested that driver education instructors test the students' knowledge through the use of measurement tools such as quizzes, handouts, and tests. For example, a recommended tool would be the use of a pre-test and a post-test. The students would receive a pre-test with questions pertaining to the module topic. This would test the student's knowledge of the subject matter. After the module is taught or at a subsequent class the students would receive a post-test to measure their comprehension of the subject.

Module 1 – Introduction to Driver's Education

Handouts: The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Driver's Manual

The Driver's Manual should be used throughout the driver's education program as it contains information that is included in each of the required modules.

A student and/or parent letter from the Registrar

Videos: The Greatest Gift: from the Lazarus Organ Donor Awareness Program 8 min. A video with the topic of good decision-making.

Module 2 – Signs, Signals & Road Markings

Diagram: Displaying signs, signals and road markings

Activity: A sign memory activity.

Module 3 – Understanding the Vehicle and Its Controls

Video: A video displaying vehicle controls and locations.

Activity: Student brings in a car owner's manual. Instructor walks student through manual in general terms discussing the importance of certain instruments and controls.

Module 4 – Basic Driving Skills

Video: AAA: Drivers Zed - A video explaining the use of mirrors, changing lanes, and/or passing or being passed.

Handout: Use of mirrors pamphlet (Liberty Mutual Insurance has slides on how to adjust mirrors)

Module 5 – Rules of the Road

Video: MBTA/Operation Lifesaver:
Why wait for the train? 24:10 min

Video explaining driving in rotaries and roundabouts.

(New York, Washington State, and Missouri DOT have information about roundabouts on their websites.)

Module 6 – Making Safe Driving Decisions

Video: Anatomy of a Tragedy, "Safety Belts Matter" 25 min

AAA: Preventing Road Rage: Anger management for drivers 20:18 min

DDD: Aggressive Driving Video Irish crash video clip
Taxi crash video clip

Guest Speaker: Address the importance of safe decision-making

For example, this speaker may have made poor decisions that resulted in a negative outcome.

Module 7 – Sharing the Road

Video: Cars, Motorcycles and A Common Road:
A motorist awareness program 8.5 min

Children in Traffic

Right Hook 1.1 min

Dutch Reach 2.1 min

Handouts: Infrastructure

Safe Passing

Right Hook

Four Foot Sticker

Module 8 – How Natural Laws Affect Driving

Video: AAA: Unlocking the mystery of ABS

Module 9 – Different Driving Environments

Video: AAA: Managing Visibility, Time and

Space Video explaining Right-of-Way

Rules

Module 10 – Driving in all Weather Conditions

Video Show a video which demonstrates hydroplaning, skidding and regaining control of the vehicle.

Guest Speaker Representative from law enforcement who can explain and provide examples of how weather conditions affect driving.

Module 11 – Mental & Physical Condition Affect Driving

Diagram or Chart Provide students with scientific statistical information, which depicts how physical and mental condition, affect the abilities of a driver

Module 12 – The Dangers of Alcohol, Drugs and Driving

NIH Publications NIH Drugged Driving Facts (rev. 2021)

NIH Commonly Abused Drugs Fact Sheet (rev. January 2016)

https://nida.nih.gov/publications/drugfacts/drugged-driving

Module 13 – Distracted Driving

Mass RMV Driver Education Program Manual: https://www.mass.gov/doc/drivers-education-program-curriculum/download

Distraction.gov
https://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/distracted-driving

National Safety Council
http://www.nsc.org/learn/NSC-Initiatives/Pages/distracted-driving-research-studies.aspx

Module 14 – Consequences of Unsafe Diving & Poor Decision Making

Guest Speaker: Brain Injury Association: KEYS Program

Module 15 – PART I: Handling Emergencies & Breakdowns
PART II: Final Review

Activity — Create an activity to review the driver's education curriculum they were taught. The activity should allow students to interact and participate actively in the review. A trivia game concept could provide the basic concept for this activity.

Driver Practicum Curriculum

Revised 08/2024 **Appendix B**

Introduction

This section of the driver's education curriculum is intended to list the skills and knowledge which must be taught during road driving lessons. Each student must learn and practice the skills listed in this section.

Skills

A. How to Complete a Pre-Driving Vehicle Check

- Check vehicle for properly working safety equipment (brake lights, directional lights, headlights, windshield wipers, etc)
- Check all tires for tread wear, pressure and irregular wear patters or external damage.
- Check all warning lamps and gauges (fluid levels, brake & check engine lights etc.)
- Verify amount of fuel

B. Beginning to Drive

- Adjust vehicle seats and mirrors
- Use good driving posture and proper hand placement on the wheel
- Start the engine
- Use mirrors while driving
- Start and stop the vehicle safely
- Recognize and obey traffic signs and signals
- Proper use of directionals
- Back up the vehicle at least 50 feet (straight)
- Turn around between curbs

C. On the Road Skills

- Demonstrate how to respond to different types of road signs
- How to safely navigate the vehicle and share the road with pedestrians and bicyclists
- Demonstrate proper and safe following distances
- Enter and leave various types of intersections
- Make left and right turns with the aid of traffic lights
- Make left and right turns without the aid of traffic lights (four way stop and other types of intersections)
- Changing lanes to make a turn, pass a vehicle or avoid road work

- How to safely pass a vehicle
- Merging with traffic
- Parallel park
- Stop versus yield
- Start, stop, and turn the vehicle on a hill
- Use hand signals
- Apply common sense and good decision making when driving

D. Reacting to Unexpected Situations

- How to react to all types of emergency vehicles

  The Emergency Vehicle "Move Over" Law
- Safely pull off the road for an emergency
- How to navigate debris or animals in the road
- Safely demonstrate braking techniques used for vehicles equipped with Anti-Lock Brake Systems (ABS) and non-ABS brakes (threshold braking)

Required Experiences

Students must be exposed to the following experiences as part of their road training.

- Highway Driving including entering and existing highway, changing lanes, and passing a vehicle
- Navigating an intersection without traffic signals
- Practice yielding to traffic and merging with traffic
- Pulling off the road safely
- Navigating a rotary or roundabout
- Stopping for pedestrians
- Varying vehicle speeds to accommodate driving setting and road conditions
- Parking the vehicle in a parking space on the side of the road and parking lot
- Backing the vehicle in and out of a parking space

Driving Observation Requirements

Students observing the driving of another student should be required to keep an observation journal which identifies the examples of good and bad driving they observed. They should then indicate in the journal why the driving was good and list examples of skills or behaviors. They should also list the skills and behaviors that caused what they considered bad driving and poor decision making.

Instructors should actively gather feedback from students observing the driving of another student and students should be prepared to discuss the instruction observed citing good and poor decisions made during the course of instruction.

Parent/Guardian Curriculum

Revised 08/2024 **Appendix C**

Introduction

A requirement of driver's education will be at least a two hour class for parents/guardians. The intention of this class is to educate parents/guardians about the content of the driver education curriculum, the junior operator's law and the driving skills and behaviors that their children will be learning. It is important for parents/guardians to know the skills and behaviors that they should be modeling while driving so that they can coach and mentor their children to be safe and skilled drivers.

Objectives

By the end of the class, parents should be able to:

- ✓ Explain the junior operator's law and the parent/guardian's role in supporting the law
- ✓ List the driving skills their child must master to pass a road test
- ✓ Identify the driver's education modules and the relevance to developing good driving skills
- ✓ Provide examples of family member driving behaviors which may negatively influence a new driver

Topic Outline

A. Driver's Education Overview
   Purpose and class structure
   Expectations
   Curriculum modules

B. Junior Operator's Law

C. The Safe Driver Law

D. Vulnerable Road Law (see Green Driving Tips in Module 4)

E. Eco Driving

F. Necessary Driving Skills and Behaviors

G. Parent's/Guardian's Role

   Coaching and mentoring Supporting Junior Operator Law Role mode