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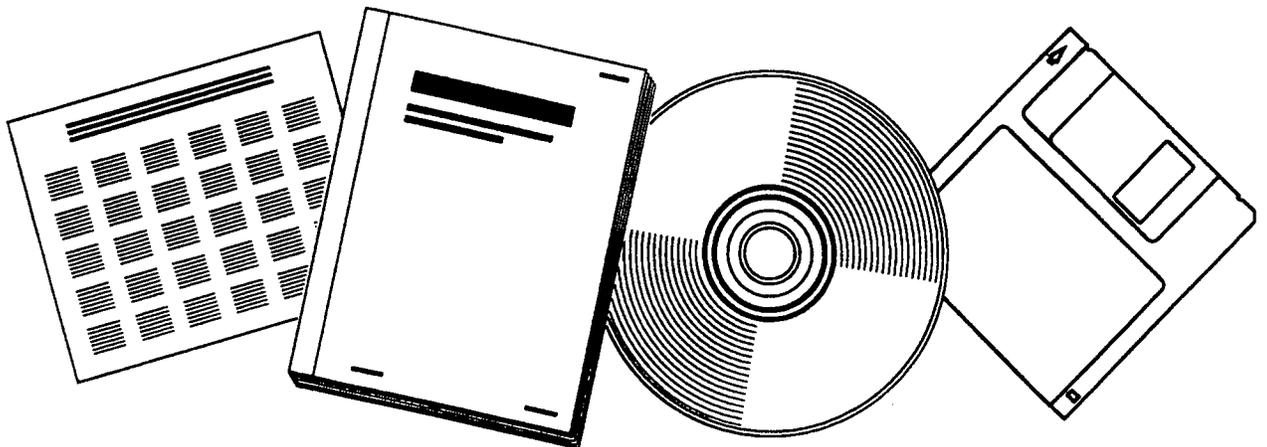
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## SUMMARY OF VEHICLE OCCUPANT PROTECTION LAWS

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Technical Information Service

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PB98-118458

# ***SUMMARY OF VEHICLE OCCUPANT PROTECTION LAWS***

***CURRENT AS OF***

***JANUARY 1, 1998***



U.S. Department of Transportation  
**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration**

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## INTRODUCTION

### PURPOSE

This publication reports the status of State statutes that are concerned with vehicle occupant protection (except off highway vehicles). Such laws include requiring the use of (1) safety belts, (2) child passenger restraint devices and (3) motorcycle or bicycle helmets. Also included are laws that prohibit riding in the bed of a pick-up truck. Except as noted, the status of the State laws reported is January 1, 1998.

### ORGANIZATION

This publication is divided into three areas: (1) Introduction; (2) Summary Table; and, (3) a State by State Analysis. The State by State Analysis is organized by State and then by specific legal topics. The State by State Analysis includes code and, where needed, case law citations; these should help individuals conducting additional research in this area of the law. The State by State Analysis can be used to facilitate the comparison of State laws in the subject areas.

The Appendix, using the State by State Analysis' format, gives the Uniform Vehicle Code's provisions on vehicle occupant protection.

### EXPLANATIONS

Required Use of Safety Belts. Although there are exemptions, State laws usually require that drivers and passengers wear a safety belt when riding in a private passenger motor vehicle. However, such a

requirement may not apply to passengers riding in certain vehicles used either for public transportation or for hire.

Limitations & Exemptions. Safety belt use laws provide for numerous limitations and exemptions. For example, this requirement only applies to motor vehicles that are required, under Federal law (49 CFR 571.208), to be equipped with safety belts. As a result, persons operating or riding in older model automobiles or passengers riding on public transportation vehicles (e.g., busses) are not required to use a safety belt. The requirement is further limited in those States that provided that only vehicle operators and front seat passengers wear safety belts. As for exemptions, a State may exempt a person from wearing a safety belt based on either a medical condition or physical size. Also, a person, who must exit a vehicle frequently to deliver goods or services, may be exempt from wearing a safety belt. And, many States provide that a taxicab or limousine passenger is exempt from wearing a safety belt.

Primary v. Secondary Enforcement of Safety Belt Use Laws. "Primary" safety belt enforcement means that law enforcement officers have the authority to issue a citation for a failure to wear a safety belt based solely on probable cause of such violation. "Secondary" enforcement means that such officers are only authorized to enforce a violation of the safety belt use law after they have first stopped a person for some other violation of the law. **Important:** In this publication, a State provides for "primary" enforcement unless otherwise indicated.

## INTRODUCTION (continued)

### Required Use of Child Restraint System.

All State laws now require that children be secured in either a child passenger protection device or safety belt when being transported in a motor vehicle. Very young children (e.g., <4 years old) must be secured in a child passenger device which, via most State laws, must satisfy Federal specifications. 49 CFR 571.213 For other children (e.g., ≥4 but <6 years old), State law provides that they may be secured in either a safety belt or a child passenger protection device. Important. Some of the same limitations and exemptions that apply to adult safety belt usage apply also to these requirements.

### Motorcycle & Bicycle Helmet Use Laws.

State laws usually limit the requirement that motorcycle operators and passengers must wear protective headgear when operating or riding on such a vehicle. Most laws mandate such use **only** for persons who are under 18 years old.

A few State laws now require children to wear an approved safety helmet when riding a bicycle.

### Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection

Device. In contrast to the above, most State laws provide that, regardless of age, operators and, in some cases, passengers of motorcycles must wear an eye protection device (e.g., goggles) while riding on a motorcycle. However, the law normally provides an exemption to this requirement if the motorcycle is equipped with a

windscreen or windshield.

Fines. Except where specifically noted, the fines reported **do not** include court costs or bail schedule forfeitures.

## COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLES

Federal law requires that persons, who operate certain commercial motor vehicles, wear a safety belt. 49 CFR 392.16 This requirement applies to persons operating a vehicle that either (1) has a gross weight rating or combination gross weight rating of ≥10,001 lbs. (≥4,537 kilograms), (2) is designed to carry >15 persons including the driver or (3) is used to transport hazardous materials. 49 CFR 390.5

The sanctions for violating this requirement are a fine of at least \$100 but not more than \$500 for a first offense and at least \$200 but not more than \$500 for a second offense. 49 USC 526

## FEEDBACK & FUTURE EDITIONS

Requests for future editions of or comments about this publication should be sent to:

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SUMMARY TABLE OF STATE VEHICLE OCCUPANT PROTECTION LAWS

S T A T E	SAFETY BELT USE LAWS <sup>1</sup>				CHILD RESTRAINT USE LAWS <sup>2</sup>				MOTORCYCLE HELMET USE LAWS <sup>3</sup>			
	Enforcement	Passengers	Maximum Fine (\$)	Points	Age	Weight (lbs)	Maximum Fine (\$)	Points	Age	Maximum Fine (\$)	Points	
AL	Secondary	Front Seat	25		<4		10		All	100 <sup>4</sup>	2	
AK	Secondary	All	15		<4		50	2	All	300	2	
AZ	Secondary	Front Seat	10		≤4	≤40	50		<18	250		
AR	Secondary	Front Seat	25		<5	<40	100		<21	50	3	
CA	Primary	All	20 <sup>4</sup>		<4	<40	100 <sup>4</sup>		All	100 <sup>4</sup>		
CO	Secondary	Front Seat	15		<4	<40	50		-- <sup>5</sup>			
CT	Primary	Front Seat	15		<4	<40	100 <sup>4</sup>		<18	90		
DE	Secondary	Front Seat	20		<4		28.75		<19	115 <sup>4</sup>	2	
DC	Primary	All	50	2	<3		55		All	25	2	
FL	Secondary	Front Seat <sup>6</sup>	30		≤5		60	3	All	30		
GA	Primary	Front Seat	15		≤4		50		All	1,000		
HI	Primary	Front Seat	20		<3		200 <sup>4</sup>		<18	1,000		
ID	Secondary	Front Seat	5		<4		100		<18	100		
IL	Secondary	Front Seat	25		<4		25 <sup>4</sup>		-- <sup>5</sup>			
IN	Secondary	Front Seat	25		<3		500	4	<18	500	4	
IA	Primary	Front Seat	10		<3		10		-- <sup>5</sup>			
KS	Secondary	Front Seat	10		<4		20		<18	10		
KY	Secondary	All	25		-- <sup>6</sup>		50		All	100		
LA	Primary	Front Seat	25 <sup>4</sup>		<5		50		All	50		
ME	Secondary	All	50		<4		500		-- <sup>7</sup>			
MD	Primary	Front	25		<4	≤40	25		All	500		

**SUMMARY TABLE OF STATE VEHICLE OCCUPANT PROTECTION LAWS**  
(continued)

S T A T E	SAFETY BELT USE LAWS <sup>1</sup>				CHILD RESTRAINT USE LAWS <sup>2</sup>				MOTORCYCLE HELMET USE LAWS <sup>3</sup>			
	Enforcement	Passengers	Maximum Fine (\$)	Points	Age	Weight (lbs)	Maximum Fine (\$)	Points	Age	Maximum Fine (\$)	Points	
MA	Secondary	All	25		≤5		25		All	35 <sup>4</sup>		
MI	Secondary	Front Seat	25		<4		10		All	100		
MN	Secondary	Front Seat	25		<4		50		<18	200		
MS	Secondary	Front Seat	25		<4		25		All	100 <sup>4</sup>		
MO	Secondary	Front Seat	10		<4		25		All	25		
MT	Secondary	All	20		<2		100		<18	5		
NE	Secondary	Front Seat	25		<4		25	- <sup>8</sup>	All	50		
NV	Secondary	All	25		<5	<40	100		All	1,000	2	
NH	Primary	<18 Years Old	25 <sup>4</sup>		<4		25 <sup>4</sup>		<18	1,000		
NJ	Secondary	Front Seat	20		<5		25		All	25		
NM	Primary	Front Seat	25		<1		25		<18	300		
NY	Primary	Front Seat	50	3	<4		100	3	All	100	2	
NC	Primary	Front Seat	25		<4		25		All	25		
ND	Secondary	Front Seat	20		<3		20		<18	500	2	
OH	Secondary	Front Seat	25		<4	<40	100 <sup>4</sup>	- <sup>9</sup>	<18	100 <sup>4</sup>		
OK	Primary	Front Seat	10		<4	<60	10		<18	500		
OR	Primary	All	75		<4	<40	75		All	75		
PA	Secondary	Front Seat	10		<4		25		All	25		
PR	Primary	Front Seat	10		<4		10		All	10		
RI	Secondary	All	None <sup>10</sup>		≤3		150		<21	35		
SC	Secondary	Front	10		<4		25		>21	100		
SD	Secondary	Front Seat	20		<2		20		<18	200		

**SUMMARY TABLE OF STATE VEHICLE OCCUPANT PROTECTION LAWS**  
(continued)

S T A T E	SAFETY BELT USE LAWS <sup>1</sup>			CHILD RESTRAINT USE LAWS <sup>2</sup>			MOTORCYCLE HELMET USE LAWS <sup>3</sup>				
	Enforcement	Passengers	Maximum Fine (\$)	Points	Age	Weight (lbs)	Maximum Fine (\$)	Points	Age	Maximum Fine (\$)	Points
TN	Secondary	Front Seat	50		<4		50		All	50	
TX	Primary	Front Seat	50		<2		50		(<21) <sup>4</sup>	50	
UT	Secondary	Front Seat	10		<2		75		<18	750	
VT	Secondary	All	10		<5		25		All	175	2
VA	Secondary	Front Seat	25		<4		50	3	All	200	3
VI	Primary	Front Seat	100 <sup>5</sup>		<5		100 <sup>5</sup>		All	200	
WA	Secondary	All	35		<3		35		All	35	
WV	Secondary	Front Seat	25		<3		20		All	100	
WI	Secondary	Front Seat	10		<4		75		<18	200	
WY	Secondary	Front Seat	None <sup>12</sup>		≤2	≤40	25 <sup>1</sup>		<18	200 <sup>4</sup>	
UVC <sup>6</sup>	Primary	All	200 <sup>4</sup>		<4		200 <sup>4</sup>		All	200 <sup>4</sup>	

<sup>1</sup>However, all passengers who are <16 years old must wear a safety belt.

<sup>2</sup>Uniform Vehicle Code

1. These columns report information about mandatory safety usage for motor vehicle operators and passengers who are ≥ 16 years old.
2. These columns report information only about the required use of child passenger protection devices. Some States provided for a weight criteria for child restraint device use as an alternative to age.
3. The information in these columns applies only to motorcycle operators.
4. This is the maximum fine for a first conviction.
5. This State does not require motorcycle operators to wear a head protection device.
6. The requirement to use a child safety device applies if the child is ≤40 inches tall.
7. The requirement to wear protective headgear applies only to operators either who are diving a motorcycle on a learner's permit or who have within one year successfully completed a motorcycle driving test.

**SUMMARY TABLE OF STATE VEHICLE OCCUPANT PROTECTION LAWS**  
(continued)

8. It may be possible to assess one point against a person's driving record.
9. It may be possible to assess two points against a person's driving record.
10. An offender is only given a "verbal warning."
11. A person, who is >21 years old, may apply for an exemption from using a safety helmet provided they either (1) have successfully completed a motorcycle operator training and safety course or (2) are covered by a health insurance plan that provides the person with at least \$10,000 in medical benefits which will cover the costs of any injury sustained while operating or riding on a motorcycle.
12. If a person is cited for a violation of the traffic laws, they may have their fine reduced by \$5 if they were wearing a safety belt.

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

ALABAMA  
Code of Alabama

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

An operator or front seat passenger of a "passenger car" (i.e., a motor vehicle designed to carry ≤ 10 persons but does not include motorcycles or trailers) shall have a safety belt properly fastened about their body any time the vehicle is in motion.<sup>2</sup> §§32-5B-2 & 32-5B-4(a)  
**Secondary Enforcement.** A person cannot be cited of a violation of this requirement unless they have been stopped and cited for another violation of the law. §32-5B-6

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Misdemeanor: A fine of not more than \$25. §32-5B-5 Note: A violation of this requirement is not to be entered on the driving record of the vehicle operator.<sup>3</sup> §§32-5A-8(a) & 32-5B-7

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to wear a safety belt shall not be considered as evidence of contributory negligence and shall not limit the liability of an insurer. §32-5B-7

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

Every person, who is transporting a child < 6 years old, shall properly restrain such child in a child passenger restraint system that meets Federal standards.<sup>5</sup> §32-5-222(a) Note: This requirement does not

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** Vehicle operators or passengers are exempt from the safety belt use requirement in the following circumstances: (1) Children, who are required to a child passenger restraint system; (2) persons, who for medical reasons, are unable to use a safety belt; (3) rural letter carriers while on office duty with the U.S. Postal Service; (4) a person (driver or passenger) who is delivering newspapers or mail; (5) passengers riding in vehicles with a model year prior to 1965; and, (6) passengers riding in motor vehicles which normally operate in reverse. §32-5B-4(b)

<sup>2</sup>Under separate provisions of law, a person must wear a safety belt when operating a school bus while transporting children. Failure to use a safety belt is *prima facie* evidence of nonfeasance of duty and subjects the driver to dismissal. In addition, if pupil transportation services are being provided for under a contract with a private firm, such a failure shall constitute a breach of contract by the private contractor. §16-27-6

<sup>3</sup>No points are to be assessed for a violation of this requirement. Regulation 760-X-.07 and UTC Offense Codes Note: Despite the fact that (1) no points can be assessed and (2) the law does not specifically authorize licensing action for such a violation, an offender may still be subject to licensing action. Under general provisions of the law, the courts are authorized to issue an order that forbids a person, who has been convicted of a traffic offense, from operating a motor vehicle for either an established period of time or perpetually. §32-5-316

<sup>4</sup>A bicycle passenger, who either weights < 40 lbs. or who is < 40 inches in height, must be properly seated in and adequately secured in a restraining seat by the bicycle operator. §32-5A-283(2) Note: For offenders, who are < 16 years old, the sanctions for this offense appear to be the same as for failure to use a bicycle safety helmet under §32-5A-285. However, the law is not clear as to the sanctions that could be imposed on offenders who are ≥ 16 years old. It may well be that the general penalty provisions for misdemeanor offenses under the vehicle code, §32-5A-8, apply. These sanctions are listed under the section that provides penalties for failure to use protective motorcycle headgear.

<sup>5</sup>For children who are 4 or 5 years old, a "child passenger restraint system" that meets Federal standards is defined by statute to include seat belts that have been installed in the motor vehicle. §32-5-222(a)

ALABAMA

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Requirements: (continued)

apply to trucks or buses weighing >1 ton. §32-5-222(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Misdemeanor: A fine of not more than \$10.<sup>3</sup> §§32-5-222(c) & 32-5A-8(a)

Effect on Civil Liability:

I. In no event shall the failure to wear a child passenger restraint system be considered as contributory negligence. §32-5-222(a)

II. This law, §32-5-222, does not create a duty or standard of care, right or liability between a parent and a child. §32-5-222(b)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

No person shall operate or ride upon a motorcycle or motor-driven cycle unless they are wearing protective headgear that complies with State law.<sup>6</sup> §§32-5A-245 & 32-12-41

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

I. Misdemeanor: 1st offense-Imprisonment for not more than 10 days and/or a fine of not more than \$100 2nd offense (within one year)-Imprisonment for not more than 30 days and/or a fine of not more than \$200 3rd or subsequent offense (within one year)-Imprisonment for not more than 3 months and/or a fine of not more than \$500 §32-5A-8(a) & (b)

II. Even though the law does not specifically authorize licensing action for this offense, an offender may be subject to such action. In general, for a traffic law violation, the courts are authorized to issue an order that forbids a person from operating a motor vehicle for either an established period of time or perpetually. §32-5-316

III. A person's driving record is assessed 2 points for a violation of this requirement. §32-5A-195, Regulation 760-X-.07 and UTC Offense Codes

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None There are no specific requirements. However, this topic is generally covered above under the use of protective headgear.

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

A person <16 years old, who operates or rides on a bicycle, must wear a protective bicycle helmet. §32-5A-283(1)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

1st offense-A police officer shall (1) counsel and provide the offender with written information on bicycle helmet safety and (2) instruct the offender to deliver the information to a parent. §32-5A-285(1)

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<sup>6</sup>This requirement does not apply to persons who are riding in an enclosed cab. §32-5A-245(c)

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Use: (continued)

2nd offense-A police officer shall counsel and provide the offender with written information on bicycle helmet safety. In addition, a warning citation shall be issued to the offender who is to give such citation to his/her parent. The citation instructs the parent (or guardian) to contact the police for information about the bicycle helmet law and where to obtain a bicycle safety helmet. §32-5A-285(2)

3rd offense-A police officer shall counsel the offender, confiscate the bicycle and take the offender to their residence. A warning citation shall be issued to either the parent or guardian. If such person is not available, the citation shall be left at the residence with instructions to pick up the bicycle at the police station. §32-5A-285(3)

4th offense-The bicycle shall be confiscated and the offender taken to their residence. A parent of guardian is subject to a fine of \$50.<sup>7</sup> There are no court costs or fees for this offense. §32-5A-285(4)

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:

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<sup>7</sup>The fine or penalty is waived or suspended if the operator or passenger presents proof of purchase of a bicycle safety helmet along with an intention of using such device. §32-5A-285(4) Note: Fines collected for this offense are only to be used to fund local school system safety education programs or the purchase of bicycle helmets for persons who are financially disadvantaged. §32-5A-285(5)



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

ALASKA  
Alaska Statutes and Alaska Administrative Code (AAC)

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. A person may not operate a motor vehicle unless they are restrained by a safety belt. §28.05.095(a)(1)
- II. Persons  $\geq 16$  years may not occupy a motor vehicle while being driven unless they are restrained by a safety belt. §28.05.095(a)(2)  
**Secondary Enforcement.** A law enforcement officer cannot stop or detain a motor vehicle to determine compliance with the requirements of I and II above unless the vehicle has been stopped or detained for some other violation of the law. §28.05.095(e)
- III. A driver may not transport a person  $\geq 4$  but  $< 16$  years old unless such person is properly secured in a safety device that is appropriate for that person and that has been approved by the U.S. Department of Transportation. §28.05.095(b)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

- I. Infraction: For a violation of I or II above, a fine of not more than \$15<sup>2</sup>. §28.05.099(a)
- II. Infraction: For a violation of III above, a fine of not more than \$50. §28.05.099(b)
- III. Licensing action: For a violation of III above, a person may be assessed points against their driving record.<sup>3</sup> §28.05.099(b)

Effect on Civil Liability:

No statutory provision.<sup>4</sup>

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:

Requirements:

A driver may not transport a person  $< 4$  years old unless that person has been properly secured in a child safety device for infants that has been approved by the U.S. Department of Transportation. §28.05.095(b)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The use of either safety belts or child passenger safety devices is not required under the following circumstances: (1) For passengers in school buses unless such buses are required by the U.S. Department of Transportation to have such belts for passengers; (2) for vehicle operators who are either delivering mail or newspapers; (3) for persons or classes of persons who have been exempted via regulations because of either physical or medical reasons; and (4) for persons riding in motor vehicles that by law are not required to have safety belts. §§28.05.095(c) & 28.05.096(a)

<sup>2</sup>As an alternative, an offender may donate \$15 to the Emergency Medical Services entity that provides services in the area where the violation occurred. §28.05.099(a)

<sup>3</sup>The point schedule does not give a specific point value for this offense. However, there is a 2 point assessment for violations of the traffic laws for which points can be assessed but no point value has been established. 13 AAC 08.210(21)

<sup>4</sup>Via case law, the failure to use a safety belt is "relevant evidence for the purpose of damage reduction" (724 P.2d at 1199) in automobile accident situations that result in bodily injuries. *Hutchins v. Schwartz*, 724 P.2d 1194 (Alaska 1986)

ALASKA

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

I. Infraction: Not more than \$50. §28.05.099(b)  
II. Licensing action: A person may be assessed points against their  
driving record.<sup>3</sup> §28.05.099(b)

Effect on Civil Liability:

No statutory provision.<sup>4</sup>

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

A person<sup>5</sup> operating or riding on a motorcycle must wear protective  
headgear that complies with either Federal government or nationally  
recognized standards. §28.05.011 and 13 AAC 04.350(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Infraction: A fine of not more than \$300.<sup>3</sup> §28.40.050(c)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

A person operating a motorcycle must wear an eye-protection device  
that complies with nationally recognized standards. This requirement  
does not apply if the motorcycle is equipped with either a windscreen  
or a windshield. §28.05.011 and 13 AAC 04.350(b)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Infraction: A fine of not more than \$300.<sup>3</sup> §28.40.050(c)

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:

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<sup>5</sup>Regulatory law provides that "[e]xcept as provided by statute, a person operating or riding upon a motorcycle or motor-driven cycle upon a public roadway must wear protective headgear...." 13 AAC 04.350(a) Statutory law provides that "[a] person who is 18 years of age or older may not be required to wear a helmet while operating a motorcycle if the person is the holder of a license or endorsement to operate a motorcycle." §28.35.245(b) Note: This statutory provision appears to apply only to operators but not to passengers.

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

ARIZONA  
Arizona Revised Statutes Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

I. A front seat occupant of a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> is required to use either lap or lap and should belt combination while the vehicle is in motion. §28-909(A)  
II. A driver must insure that from seat passengers < 16 years old comply with the above requirement. §28-909(B)  
**Secondary Enforcement.** A law enforcement officer shall not stop or issue a citation for a violation of this requirement unless the vehicle was stopped for some other motor vehicle law violation. §28-909(C)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Civil Penalty: A fine of not more than \$10<sup>3</sup> for each violation. §28-909(G)  
Note: A violation of this requirement cannot be used as a basis for suspending or revocation an offender's driving privileges. §28-909(D)

Effect on Civil Liability:

No statutory provision.<sup>4</sup>

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>5</sup>:

Requirements:

A person transporting a child, who is < 5 years old, must restrain such child in an Federally approved child passenger restraint system. §28-907(A) & (B)  
Note: There appears to be no point assessment for this offense.

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Civil Penalty: A fine of \$50<sup>3</sup>. §28-907(C)

Effect on Civil Liability:

No statutory provision.

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<sup>1</sup>Exemptions. The requirement does not apply (1) to children, who are subject to being restrained via a child safety seat; (2) to persons, who via a written statement from a physician, are unable for physical or psychological reasons cannot wear a shoulder or lap belt; and, (3) to letter carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while on official duties. §28-909(F)

<sup>2</sup>This requirement applies to persons operating or riding in motor vehicles (1) that are designed to carry ≤ 10 persons, (2) that were manufactured after model year 1972 and (3) that must be equipped with safety belts under Federal law. §28-909(A)

<sup>3</sup>An offender is also subject to assessments which can be ≤ 60% of the fine imposed. §§12-116.01 & 12-116.02

<sup>4</sup>In a case decided prior to the enactment of the mandatory safety belt use law, the Arizona Supreme Court held that failure to use a safety belt can be considered in whether to apportion damages in automobile accident injury situations. I.e., damages can be reduced if the persons seeking damages have failed to use a safety belt. *Law v. Superior Court of State of Ariz.*, 755 P.2d 1135 (Ariz. 1988)

<sup>5</sup>Exemptions. A motor vehicle operator does not have to comply with the mandatory child restraint provisions under the following circumstances. (1) The operator is driving a vehicle that was not manufactured with passenger restraint systems. (2) The operator is driving a recreational vehicle defined in §41-2142. (3) The operator is driving a commercial motor vehicle. (4) A person is transporting a child in an emergency in order to obtain medical care. (5) Due to the size of the passenger compartment of the vehicle, the operator cannot secure all of the children that must be restrained. However, the operator must restrain at least one such child and must restrain as many such children as is possible under the conditions. §28-907(G)

ARIZONA

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

A person, who is <18 years old, shall not operate or ride on a motorcycle unless they wear a protective helmet. §28-964(A)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Civil Traffic Offense: Not more than \$250.<sup>3</sup> §§28-121(B) & 28-1598  
Note: There appears to be no point assessment for this offense.

A person's failure to wear a protective helmet can be admitted into evidence to reduce the amount of damages such person will be awarded as a result of injuries they sustained in a traffic accident. However, it must be shown that such a failure contributed to the person's injuries. *Warfel v. Cheney*, 758 P.2d 1326 (Ariz.App. 1988)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

A person operating a motorcycle shall wear an eye protection device (e.g., glasses, goggles, et al.) unless the motorcycle is equipped with a protective windshield. §28-964(A)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Civil Traffic Offense: Not more than \$250.<sup>3</sup> §§28-121(B) & 28-1598  
Note: There appears to be no point assessment for this offense.

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

ARKANSAS  
Arkansas Code Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

When a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> is in operation, every driver and front seat passenger shall wear a seat belt. §27-37-702(a)  
**Secondary Enforcement.** A motor vehicle cannot be stopped solely to determine if its occupants are in compliance with this requirement. §27-37-704

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

A fine of not more than \$25<sup>3</sup>. §27-37-706(a)  
Note: No report of this violation is to be made on an offender's driver record by the Office of Driver Services. §27-37-707

Effect on Civil Liability:

The failure to wear a safety belt cannot be admitted into evidence at a civil action except in limit products liability cases. §27-37-703

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

A driver, who transports a child <5 years old in a passenger automobile, van, or pickup truck (but not vehicles operated for hire), shall secure such child in a child passenger restraint system that complies with Federal standards.<sup>5</sup> §27-34-104(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

A fine of not less than \$25 nor more than \$100. §27-34-103(a) Note: No points are assigned to a person's driving record for a violation of this requirement. Regulation 2-27-16-907(a)(4)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a safety belt does not apply in the following situations: (1) To passenger automobiles manufactured prior to January 1, 1968 and to all other vehicles manufacture prior to January 1, 1972; (2) to passengers and drivers who have a physical condition that would make the use of a safety belt inappropriate; (3) to children who are required to be restrained in a child safety seat; and, (4) to drivers who are rural letter carriers for the United States. §27-37-702(b)

<sup>2</sup>For purposes of safety belt usage, a "motor vehicle" means any motor vehicle except a school bus, church bus, or other public conveyance which is required by Federal law or regulation to be equipped with a passenger restraint system. §27-37-701(1) However, "[t]he driver or operator of a school bus shall wear a seat belt at all times while operating the school bus whenever the bus is so equipped." §6-19-109

<sup>3</sup>No court or other costs can be assessed. §27-37-706(b)

<sup>4</sup>**Exemptions.** A driver does not have to comply with the child safety seat requirement under the following circumstances: (1) The motor vehicle is being used as an ambulance or other emergency vehicle; (2) an emergency exists that threatens the life of either the driver or child; and, (3) because of medical reasons, the child is unable to be restrained. §27-34-105

<sup>5</sup>The law provides that a driver can comply with this general requirement in two ways. (1) A driver, who transports a child who is either <4 years or who weighs <40 lbs., must secure such child in a Federally approved child passenger restraint system. §27-34-104(b) (2) However, a driver, who transports a child who is either ≥4 but <5 years old or who weighs ≥40 lbs., satisfies the general requirement if they secure such a child in a safety belt. §27-34-104(c)

ARKANSAS

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Effect on Civil Liability:

The failure to provide or use a child passenger safety seat shall not be considered, under any circumstances, as evidence of comparative or contributory negligence.<sup>6</sup> §27-34-106(a)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

All motorcycle passengers and riders <21 years old "shall be equipped" with protective headgear. §27-20-104(b)(1)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

I. Misdemeanor: Imprisonment for not more than **30 days** and/or a fine of not less than **\$10** nor more than **\$50**. §27-20-102  
II. Licensing action: The law is not specific, but action may be possibly under those provisions that provide for discretionary license suspension or revocation for habitual violations of the traffic laws. §27-16-907 Such action is normally taken via the point system. Under this system, no points have been assigned for this violation. However, 3 points are assigned for violations of the traffic laws where no point value has been specifically assigned. Regulation 2-27-16-907(a)(4)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

All motorcycle passengers and riders (regardless of age) "shall be equipped" with protective glasses, goggles or transparent face shields. §27-20-104(b)(2)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

I. Misdemeanor: Imprisonment for not more than **30 days** and/or a fine of not less than **\$10** nor more than **\$50**. §27-20-102  
II. Licensing action: The law is not specific, but action may be possibly under those provisions that provide for discretionary license suspension or revocation for habitual violations of the traffic laws. §27-16-907 Such action is normally taken via the point system. Under this system, no points have been assigned for this violation. However, 3 points are assigned for violations of the traffic laws where no point value has been specifically assigned. Regulation 2-27-16-907(a)(4)

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

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<sup>6</sup>In addition, the failure to provide or use a child passenger safety seat is not to be considered as evidence of negligent homicide. §27-34-106(b)

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

No person shall ride upon any portion of a vehicle that is not designed or intended for the use of passengers. §27-35-104(a)

Sanctions for a Violation:

I. Misdemeanor: 1st offense-Imprisonment for not more than **10 days** and/or a fine of not more than **\$100**.

2nd offense (within 1 year)-Imprisonment for not more than **20 days** and/or a fine of not more than **\$200**.

3rd or subsequent offense (within 1 year)-Imprisonment for not more than **6 months** and/or a fine of not more than **\$500**. §§27-35-101 & 27-50-305(b)

II. Licensing action: The law is not specific, but action may be possibly under those provisions that provide for discretionary license suspension or revocation for habitual violations of the traffic laws. §27-16-907 Such action is normally taken via the point system. Under this system, no points have been assigned for this violation. However, 3 points are assigned for violations of the traffic laws where no point value has been specifically assigned. Regulation 2-27-16-907(a)(4)

Exemptions:

This requirement does not apply either (1) to employees engaged in the discharge of official duties or (2) to persons riding within bodies of trucks in a space intended for merchandise. §27-35-104(b)



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

CALIFORNIA  
West's Annotated California Codes

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. No person shall operate a private passenger vehicle<sup>2</sup> unless such person and all passengers  $\geq 16$  years old are properly restrained by a safety belt. This requirement does not apply to taxicab operators driving on city streets. Veh. Code §27315(d)(1) & (e)
- II. No person shall operate either a limousine for hire or an emergency vehicle<sup>1</sup> unless the operator and front seat passengers who are  $\geq 4$  years old or who weigh  $\geq 40$  lbs., are restrained by a safety belt. Veh. Code §27315(d)(2)
- III. No person shall operate a taxicab unless front seat passengers who are  $\geq 4$  years old or who weigh  $\geq 40$  lbs., are restrained by a safety belt. Veh. Code §27315(d)(3)
- IV. No person shall transport a child in a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup>, who is either  $\geq 4$  years but  $< 16$  years or who weighs  $\geq 40$  lbs. unless such child is restrained by a safety belt.<sup>3</sup> Veh. Code §27360.5(b)
- V. No parent or legal guardian when present in a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> shall permit his or her child, who is either  $\geq 4$  but  $< 16$  years old or who weighs  $\geq 40$  lbs., to be transported unless such child is a safety belt.<sup>3</sup> Veh. Code §27360.5(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

- I. For a Violation of I, II & III Above. Infraction: 1st offense-A fine of not more than \$20 including any penalty assessment and court costs and a special sanction of \$2. Subsequent offense-A fine of not more than \$50 including any penalty assessment and court costs and a special sanction of \$5. Veh. Code §27315(h) & (i) Note: In lieu of the above fine, a 1st offender may be ordered to attend traffic school in which the proper use of safety belts is demonstrated. Veh. Code §27315(h)
- II. For a Violation of IV & V Above. Infraction: 1st offense-A fine of \$50 2nd or subsequent offense-A fine of \$100 Veh. Code §27360.5(c)(1) & (2)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To operator or passengers who have either a physical or mental condition, duly certified by a physical or chiropractor, that would make it inappropriate for such person to use a safety belt; (2) to a public employee (operator or passenger) or to a non-employee passenger behind the front seat of an emergency vehicle while riding in such vehicle unless such use is required by the governmental agency; (3) to persons delivering newspapers while they are in the process of making deliveries; (4) to rural delivery carriers for the U.S. Postal Service while delivering mail; and, (5) to passengers  $\geq 16$  years old who are using a "sleeper berth." Veh. Code §27315(e), (g), (n) & (o)

<sup>2</sup>"Motor vehicle" means any passenger vehicle, any motor truck or truck tractor. However, the term does not include motorcycles. Veh. Code §§27315(c) & 27360.5 **Important.** The requirements of IV and V also apply to persons who are transporting children in a fully enclosed three-wheeled motor vehicles that are not less than 7 feet in length, that are not less than 4 feet in width and that have an unladen weight of 900 lbs. or more. Veh. Code §27368

<sup>3</sup>**Exemptions.** I. The court may exempt a child from the use of a passenger restraint system if it determines that the use of such a system would be impractical due to child's physical unfitness, medical condition or size. Veh. Code §27363(a) II. A child does not have to be restrained in a child passenger restraint system if they are being transported in an emergency vehicle without such a system. However, the child does have to be secured in a safety belt. Veh. Code §27363(b)

CALIFORNIA

Required Use of Safety Belts: (continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts: (continued)

Note: It appears that no points are assigned for a violation of these requirements.

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of the requirements of I, II & III above shall not establish negligence as a matter of law or negligence per se in any civil action for comparative fault purposes. Nevertheless, negligence may be proven as a fact without regard to the violation. Veh. Code §27315(j)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>3</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. No passenger vehicle<sup>4</sup> operator shall transport a child, who is either <4 years old or who weighs <40 lbs. (regardless of age), unless such child is properly restrained in a Federally approved child passenger restraint system. Veh. Code §27360(b)
- II. No parent or legal guardian, when present in a passenger vehicle<sup>4</sup> shall permit his or her child, who is either <4 years old or who weighs <40 lbs. (regardless of age), to be transported unless such child is properly restrained in a Federally approved child passenger restraint system. Veh. Code §27360(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Infraction: 1st offense-A fine of \$100<sup>5</sup> 2nd or subsequent offender-A mandatory fine of \$100 Veh. Code §27360(c)(1) & (2) A person's driving record will be assessed 1 point if they are convicted of a violation of these requirements within a 37 month period. Veh. Code §12810(j)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

When riding on a motorcycle<sup>6</sup>, a driver or passenger must wear a safety helmet meeting national standards. Veh. Code §27803(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Infraction: 1st offense-A fine of not more than \$100 2nd offense

<sup>4</sup>The term "passenger vehicle" means any passenger vehicle and any motortruck of <6,001 lbs. unladen weight. Veh. Code §27360(a) In addition, child passenger restraint requirements apply to children who are being transported in a fully enclosed three-wheeled motor vehicles that are not less than 7 feet in length, that are not less than 4 feet in width and that have an unladen weight of 900 lbs. or more. Veh. Code §27368

<sup>5</sup>For 1st offenders, this fine is waived if they are economically disadvantaged. Veh. Code §27360(c)(1)

<sup>6</sup>This requirement also applies to persons operating or riding on motor-driven cycles or motorized bicycles. Veh. Code §27803(d) However, this requirement does not apply to persons operating or riding in a fully enclosed three-wheeled motor vehicles that are not less than 7 feet in length, that are not less than 4 feet in width and that have an unladen weight of 900 lbs. or more provided the vehicle meets or exceeds all of the safety requirements of the California Vehicle Code and the Federal Government (i.e., Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards). Veh. Code §27803(f)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Use: (continued)

(within 1 year)-A fine of not more than \$200 3rd and subsequent offense (within 1 year)-A fine of not more than \$250 Veh. Code §42001(a). Note: It appears that no points are assigned for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

No specific requirement.

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

A person < 18 years old shall not operate or ride on a bicycle unless they are wearing a bicycle helmet that complies with national standards. Veh. Code §21212(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Infraction: 1st offense-There is **no fine**. Subsequent offense-A fine of not more than \$25 Veh. Code §21212(d)(2) & (e) Note: It appears that no points are assigned for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

I. A vehicle operator shall not allow a person to ride upon any part of a vehicle that is not designed or intended for passenger use. Veh. Code §21712(a)  
II. No person shall ride on vehicle or upon any part of a vehicle that is not designed or intended for passenger use. Veh. Code §21712(b)  
III. No person driving a pickup truck or flatbed motortruck shall transport a person in or on the back thereof unless the passenger is restrained by a Federally approved restraint system. Veh. Code §23116(a) & (c)  
IV. No person shall ride in or on the back of a pickup truck or flatbed motortruck unless they are restrained by a Federally approved restraint system Veh. Code §23116(b) & (c)

Sanctions for a Violation:

Infraction: 1st offense-A fine of not more than \$100 2nd offense (within 1 year)-A fine of not more than \$200 3rd or subsequent offense (within 1 year)-A fine of not more than \$250 Veh. Code §42001(a)

Exemptions:

I. The prohibitions contained in Veh. Code §21712(a) & (b) do not apply in situations where a passenger either (1) is an employee

CALIFORNIA

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle: (continued)

Exemptions: (continued)

discharging duties or (2) is riding completely within or upon vehicle body. Veh. Code §217129(c)

II. The prohibitions contained in Veh. Code §23116(a) & (b) do not apply if a person is being transported in the back of the vehicle as a result of an emergency situation and at the direction of a public agency. Veh. Code §23116(d)

III. The prohibitions contained in Veh. Code §23116(a) & (b) do not apply in situations where a passenger is in an enclosed camper or camper shell that prevents the person from being discharged from the vehicle. Veh. Code §23116(e)

Note: It appears that no points are assigned for a violation of these requirements.

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

COLORADO  
Colorado Revised Statutes

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

I. A driver and front seat passengers of a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> shall wear a safety belt while the vehicle is being operated. §42-4-237(2)

**Secondary Enforcement.** A law enforcement office cannot cite a driver for a violation of §42-4-237(2) unless the driver was stopped for some other traffic law violation. §42-4-237(5)

II. A driver of either a noncommercial passenger vehicle or a vehicle operated by a child care center, who transports a child  $\geq 4$  but  $< 16$  years old and who weighs  $\geq 40$  lbs., must secure such child in a safety belt system.<sup>3</sup> §42-4-236(2)(b) & (c)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

I. A violation of I above is a Class B Traffic Infraction: A fine of \$15 and a surcharge of \$2.<sup>4</sup> §§42-4-237(4) & 42-4-1701(4)(a)(I)(D)

II. A violation of II above is a Class B Traffic Infraction: A fine of \$50 and a surcharge of \$6.<sup>4</sup> §§42-4-236(7) & 42-4-1701(4)(a)(I)(D)

Note: It appears that no points are assessed for a violation of these requirements.

Effect on Civil Liability:

I. Evidence of a failure to wear a safety belt in violation of I above shall be admissible to mitigate damages. However, such mitigation is limited only to awards for pain and suffering. §42-4-237(7)

II. A violation of II above shall not constitute negligence per se or contributory negligence per se. §42-4-236(6)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>3</sup>:

Requirements:

A driver of either a private owned noncommercial passenger vehicle or a vehicle operated by a child care center, who transports a child  $< 4$  years old and who weighs  $< 40$  lbs., must properly secure such child in

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** This requirement does not apply in the following situations: (1) To a child who must be restrained according to §42-4-236; (2) to a member of an ambulance team, except the driver, when involved in patient care; (3) certain law enforcement officers when performing official duties; (4) to persons who are exempt from wearing safety belts because of physical or psychological conditions; (5) to persons who are riding in motor vehicles that do not have safety belts because such vehicles are exempt from having such equipment; (6) to rural letter carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while performing official duties; and, (7) to persons who are actually performing delivery or pickup services. §42-4-237(3)

<sup>2</sup>The term "motor vehicle" means either a passenger car, a station wagon, a van, a taxicab, an ambulance, a motor home or a pickup truck. However, the term does not include either a motorcycle, a motorscooter, a motorbicycle, a motorized bicycle, a passenger bus, a school bus, farm tractor or implements of husbandry. §42-4-237(a)(a)

<sup>3</sup>**Exemptions.** This requirement does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To children who are being transported in a privately owned noncommercial motor vehicle where all of the seating positions are occupied; (2) to children who are being transported as a result of a medical emergency; (3) to children who are being transported in certain commercial motor vehicles; and, (4) to children ( $\geq 16$  years old) who are operating motor vehicles and who must comply with mandatory safety belt use requirements. §42-4-236(2)(c)

<sup>4</sup>An offender may be ordered by the court to attend a course of instruction on traffic laws, hazardous driving situations and accident prevention. §42-4-1717

**COLORADO**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems  
(continued)

Requirements: (continued)

a child restraint system. §42-4-236(2)(a) & (c)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Class B Traffic Infraction: A fine of **\$50** and a surcharge of **\$6.**<sup>3</sup> §§42-4-236(7) & 42-4-1701(4)(a)(I)(D) Note: It appears that no points are assessed for a violation of this requirement.

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of this statutory provision shall not constitute negligence per se or contributory negligence per se. §42-4-236(6)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None<sup>5</sup>

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

A person shall not operate or ride on a motorcycle or motor-driven cycle unless they are wearing goggles or eyeglasses with lenses made of safety glass or plastic per standards promulgated by the State. §42-4-232(1)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Class A Traffic Infraction: A fine of **\$15** and a surcharge of **\$2.**<sup>3</sup> §§42-4-232(4) & 42-4-1701(4)(a)(I)(D) Note: It appears that no points are assessed for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

I. A person is prohibited from riding on the outside, top, hood or fenders or any other portion of a vehicle except that they may ride, while in a sitting position, in the cargo area of a vehicle if the area is fully or partially enclosed on all four (4) sides. §42-4-201(6)

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<sup>5</sup>Evidence of a person's failure to wear a protective helmet is inadmissible to show either negligence of the person or to mitigate damages. *Dare v. Sobule*, 674 P.2d 960 (Colo. 1984)

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle: (continued)

Requirements: (continued)

II. A driver shall not knowingly permit a person to ride on the top, hood or fenders or any other portion of a vehicle except that a passenger may ride, while in a sitting position, in the cargo area of a vehicle if the area is fully or partially enclosed on all four (4) sides. §42-4-201(6)

Sanctions for a Violation:

Class A Traffic Infraction: A fine of \$35 and a surcharge of \$4.<sup>3</sup> §§42-4-201(8) & 42-4-1701(4)(a)(I)(D) Note: It appears that no points are assessed for a violation of these requirements.

Exemptions:

The above prohibitions do not apply (1) to officially authorized parades, caravans or exhibitions or (2) to vehicles owned by either the U.S. Government, the State of Colorado and its political subdivisions, Federal or State government contractors, or public utilities. §42-4-201(7)



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

CONNECTICUT  
Connecticut General Statutes Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

I. The operator and front seat passengers  $\geq 16$  years old in a private passenger motor vehicle<sup>2</sup>, fire fighting apparatus or vanpool vehicle shall wear safety belts while the vehicle is in motion. §14-100a(c)(1)  
II. A vehicle operator shall secure in a safety belt any passenger  $\geq 4$  but  $< 16$  years old. §14-100a(c)(1)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Infraction: A fine of \$15. §14-100a(c)(5)

Note: No points can be assessed against a driver's record for a conviction for violating this requirement. §14-100a(c)(5)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to wear a safety belt shall not be considered as contributory negligence nor shall such failure be admissible evidence in any civil action.<sup>3</sup> §14-100a(c)(4)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:

Requirements:

A person, who transports a child  $< 4$  year old and weighing  $< 40$  lbs., in a motor vehicle<sup>4</sup>, must require that such child be secured in an approved child restraint system.<sup>5</sup> §14-100a(d)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

1st offense (Infraction)-A fine of not more than \$100<sup>6</sup> 2nd offense (Infraction)-A fine of not more than \$199 3rd or subsequent offense (Class A Misdemeanor)-An imprisonment sentence of not more than 1 year and/or a fine of not more than \$2,000 §§14-100a(d), 14-164, 53a-36 & 53a-42 A 1st or 2nd offender may be required to attend a course on child car seat safety. §14-100a(d)

Note: It appears that no points are assessed for a violation of this requirement.

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a safety belt does not apply to persons whose physical disability or impairment would prevent restraint in a safety belt. §14-100a(c)(2)

<sup>2</sup>"Private passenger motor vehicle" does not mean (1) an authorized emergency vehicle, except fire fighting equipment responding to an emergency call, (2) vehicles operated by rural letter carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while performing official duties or (3) vehicles used by persons engaged in the delivery of newspapers. §14-100a(c)(3)

<sup>3</sup>The failure to wear a safety belt as required by law shall not constitute probable cause for a law enforcement officer to conduct a search of a vehicle and its contents. §54-33m

<sup>4</sup>A "motor vehicle" does not include a bus having tonnage rating  $\geq 1$  ton. §14-100a(d)

<sup>5</sup>**Alternative.** As alternative to using a child restraint system, a driver may secure a child  $< 4$  years old and weighing  $\geq 40$  lbs., in a safety belt. §14-100a(d)

<sup>6</sup>The law provides that the judges of the superior court establish a fine schedule for infractions. The maximum fine that can be established is \$100. §51-164m

**CONNECTICUT**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to use a child safety restraint system shall not be considered as contributory negligence nor shall such failure be admissible evidence in any civil action. §14-100a(d)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear<sup>7</sup>:

Requirements:

No person < 18 years old may operate or ride on a motorcycle unless they are wearing State approved protective headgear. §14-289g(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Infraction: A fine of not less than \$90. §14-289g(c) Note: It appears that no points are assessed for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device<sup>8</sup>:

Requirements:

A person, who operates a motorcycle, must wear goggles, glasses or a face shield as approved by the State.

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Infraction: A fine of not more than \$50. §§14-289d(b) & 14-296  
Note: It appears that no points are assessed for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

A child ≤ 15 years old shall not ride a bicycle on a highway unless they are wearing appropriate protective headgear.<sup>9</sup> §14-286d(b)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

There are no sanctions for a violation of this requirement. However, a law enforcement officer may issue a verbal warning to the parent or guardian of a child that has violated this requirement. §14-286d(b) & (c)

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

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<sup>7</sup>The Connecticut Superior Court has held that the failure to use protective headgear (helmet) is not negligence. In addition, the court determined that a person is not required to mitigate damages by wearing such a device. *Ruth v. Poggie*, 1993 Conn. Super. LEXIS 3090

<sup>8</sup>Exemptions. This requirement does not apply if the motorcycle has a wind screen or windshield. §14-289d(b)

<sup>9</sup>Failure to wear protective headgear as required by law shall not be considered to be contributory negligence on the part of a parent or child no shall such failure be admissible in any civil action. §14-286d(b)

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

No person shall operate and carry a passenger < 16 years on in an open bed of a truck type vehicle<sup>10</sup> or other vehicle. However, such passengers are allowed to ride in such open spaces provided they are properly restrained in a safety belt. §14-272a(a)

Sanctions for a Violation:

Infraction: A fine of not more than \$50. §§14-272a(b) & 14-296

Note: It appears that no points are assessed for a violation of this requirement.

Exemptions:

This prohibition does not apply in the following situations: (1) To a vehicle used in an authorized parade; (2) to a vehicle when such is used for farming purposes; and, (3) to a vehicle used for a recreational hayride in the months of August and December. §14-272a(a)

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<sup>10</sup>A truck type vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating not exceeding 750 lbs. §14-727a(a)



**JURISDICTION:**  
General Reference:

**DELAWARE**  
Delaware Code Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

I. When a motor vehicle (except motorcycles, tractors or off-highway vehicles) is in operation, a driver shall wear and shall secure all front seat passengers in a safety belt. Title 21, §§101(20) and 4802(a)(1), (a)(2) & (b)

**Secondary Enforcement.** A motor vehicle shall not be stopped by a police officer for failing to comply with this section. Title 21, §4802(d)

II. When being transported in a motor vehicle, a child  $\geq 4$  but  $< 16$  years old shall wear a safety belt at all times. Title 21, §4803(b)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

I. For a violation of I above<sup>2</sup>, a Penalty Assessment of 40% of the fine or fines imposed for other traffic laws committed at the time of the safety belt law violation. However, no assessment can be  $> \$20$ . Title 21, §4802(g)(2)a Note: Neither shall any points be assessed against a person nor shall an entry made on such person's driving record because of a violation of the safety belt use requirement. Title 21, §4802(h)

II. For a violation of II above<sup>2</sup>, a fine of not more than **\$28.75**. Title 21, §4803(d)

Note: It appears that no points are assessed for a violation of these requirements.

Effect on Civil Liability:

I. Failure to wear a safety belt, per I above, shall not be considered as evidence of either comparative or contributory negligence in any civil suit or insurance claim adjudication. In addition, such a failure is not admissible as evidence in the trial of any civil action or insurance claim adjudication. Title 21, §4802(i)

II. A failure to secure a child  $\geq 4$  but  $< 16$  years old in a safety belt shall not be considered as evidence of either comparative or contributory negligence in any civil suit or of criminal negligence or recklessness in any criminal action. Evidence of such failure cannot be admitted into evidence at a civil trial. Title 21, §4803(e)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>3</sup>:

Requirements:

A person, who is transporting a child  $< 4$  years, shall properly secure such child in a Federally approved child passenger restraint system. Title 21, §4803(a)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** This requirement does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons, who for medical or physical reasons, are unable to wear a safety belt; (2) to persons riding in motor vehicles that do not have to be equipped with safety belts; and, (3) to letter carriers of the U.S. Postal Service when performing official duties. Title 21, §4802(c)

<sup>2</sup>A violation is a misdemeanor offense. Title 11, §233(c)

<sup>3</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a child passenger restraint system does not apply if the child is being transported in a motor bus, limousine or taxicab. Title 21, §4803(a)

**DELAWARE**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

A fine of not more than **\$28.75**.<sup>2</sup> Title 21, §4803(d) Note: It appears that no points are assessed for a violation of this requirement.

Effect on Civil Liability:

A failure to secure a child <4 years old properly in a child passenger restraint system shall not be considered as evidence of either comparative or contributory negligence in any civil suit or of criminal negligence or recklessness in any criminal action. Evidence of such failure cannot be admitted into evidence at a civil trial. Title 21, §4803(e)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

A person <19 years old shall wear a safety helmet, that has been approved, by the State when operating or riding a motorcycle.<sup>4</sup> Title 21, §4185(b)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

1st offense-A fine of not less than **\$25** nor more than **\$115**<sup>2</sup> Subsequent offense (within 12 months)-An imprisonment term of not less than **10 days** nor more than **\$30 days** and/or a fine of not less than **\$57.50** nor more than **\$250**<sup>2</sup> Title 21, §4205(a) Two (2) points are assessed for a violation of this requirement. Title 21, §§302 & 2733 and Department of Public Safety Police Regulation No. 45

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

A person <16 years shall not operate or ride a bicycle unless they wear a properly fitted and fastened bicycle helmet which meets national standards.<sup>5</sup> Title 21, §4198L(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

A child's guardian who fails to cause the child to wear such helmet is subject to a fine. 1st offense-**\$25**<sup>2</sup> Subsequent offense-**\$50**<sup>2</sup> Title 21, §4198L(b)

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<sup>4</sup>Motorcycle operators or passengers ≥ 19 years old are required to have a safety helmet in their possession but are not required to use it. Title 21, §4185(b)

<sup>5</sup>Failure to wear a bicycle safety helmet shall not be considered evidence of either comparative or contributory negligence in any civil suit nor shall such evidence be admissible as evidence in the trial of any civil action. Title 21, §4198L(e)

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements: **None**

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements: **None**

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
D.C. Code and D.C. Municipal Regulations (DCMR)

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

The driver and all passengers in a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> shall wear safety belts. D.C. Code §40-1602(a) Note: Except for vehicles for hire, a driver is responsible for insuring that passengers comply with this requirement. D.C. Code §40-1606(f)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Civil Infraction: A fine of \$50. However, the mayor is authorized to increase this fine penalty. D.C. Code §40-1606(b)(2) & (e) and 18 DCMR 2600.1 Note: A vehicle operator, who violates this requirement, has 2 points assigned to their driving record. D.C. Code §40-1606(d)

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of I above shall not constitute evidence of negligence, evidence of contributory negligence or a basis for a civil action for damages. Also, such a violation shall not be used as the basis for mitigating damages arising from a civil liability. D.C. Code §40-1607

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>3</sup>:

Requirements:

I. A motor vehicle operator shall not transport a child <3 years old unless such child has been secured in a child restraint seat which conforms to Federal standards. D.C. Code §§40-1203(a) & 40-1204  
II. A motor vehicle operator shall not transport a child between 3 and 16 years old unless such child has been restrained in either a safety belt or child restraint seat. D.C. Code §40-1203(b)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Infraction: A fine of \$55.<sup>4</sup> D.C. Code §40-1206(a)

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<sup>1</sup>Exemptions. This requirement does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons riding in motor vehicles manufactured before July 1, 1966; (2) to persons who are unable to wear a safety belt for medical reasons; and, (3) to passengers where all of the seating positions with seat belts are occupied by other persons. However, the driver is required to insure that passengers ≤16 years old have preference to seating positions with seat belts over passengers who are >16 years old. D.C. Code §40-1602(b)

<sup>2</sup>For the purposes of safety belt usage, a "motor vehicle" is defined as a device with more than 3 wheels and a seating capacity of 8 or less. D.C. Code §40-1601(1)

<sup>3</sup>Exemptions. I. This requirement does not apply to children who are being transported in vehicles used for livery, sightseeing, taxi, ambulance, funeral, or farm purposes or who are being transported in a motor vehicle with a seating capacity of more than 8 passengers not including the driver. D.C. Code §40-1202(5) II. In addition, a parent or legal guardian may transport an unrestrained child <16 years provided there are no seating positions available for the child's use. However, front seat children must be secured. D.C. Code §40-1203(c)

<sup>4</sup>The law is not specific but a person may have 2 points assessed against their driving record. Title 18 DCMR §303.1(d)

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of the above requirements shall not constitute evidence of negligence, evidence of contributory negligence or a basis for a civil action for damages. D.C. Code §40-1207

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

Persons operating or riding on a motorcycle must wear helmets that comply with nationally approved standards. D.C. Code §40-703 and 18 DCMR 741.1

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Infraction: A fine of \$25.<sup>4</sup> 18 DCMR 2600.1

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

Persons operating or riding on a motorcycle must wear safety eye protection devices that comply with nationally approved standards. D.C. Code §40-703 and 18 DCMR 742.1

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Infraction: A fine of \$25.<sup>4</sup> 18 DCMR 2600.1

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

(1) No person shall ride and (2) no driver shall allow a person to ride on any portion of any vehicle which is not designed or intended for the use of passengers. D.C. Code §40-703 and 18 DCMR 2213.6

Sanctions for a Violation:

Infraction: A fine of \$25.<sup>4</sup> 18 DCMR 2600.1

Exemptions:

This prohibition does not apply to an employee engaged in the necessary discharge of their duties or to persons riding within truck bodies in a space intended for materials.<sup>5</sup> 18 DCMR 2213.6

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<sup>5</sup>This exemption may not apply due to the provisions of the safety belt and child restraint laws.

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

FLORIDA  
Florida Statutes Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

I. A driver cannot operate a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> unless they and every passenger < 16 years old is restrained by a safety belt. §316.614(4)  
II. A front seat passenger ≥ 16 years old must secure themselves in a safety belt while a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> is in motion. §316.614(5)  
**Secondary Enforcement.** Before a person can be charged with a violation of these requirements, the vehicle in use must have been stopped for some other violation of the law. §316.614(8)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Nonmoving Violation<sup>3</sup>: A fine of \$30 with court costs of \$6.<sup>4</sup>  
§§316.614(8), 318.14 and 318.18(2) & (11)

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of this requirement shall not constitute negligence per se, nor shall such a violation be used as *prima facie* evidence of negligence or be considered in mitigation of damages, but such a violation may be considered as evidence of comparative negligence, in any civil action. §316.614(9)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:

Requirements:

A motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> operator, when transporting a child ≤ 5 years old, must secure such child in a Federally approved child restraint device. Children ≤ 3 years old must be secured in either a separate carrier or vehicle manufacturer's integrated child seat. Children 4 but ≤ 5 years old must be secured in either a separate carrier, vehicle manufacturer's

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** This requirement does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons who have a medical condition that would cause the use of a safety belt to be either inappropriate or dangerous; (2) to persons while in the course of delivering newspapers; (3) to employees of a solid wastes or recyclable collection service while in the course of employment; or, (4) to persons riding either in the living quarters of a recreational vehicle or in the space within a truck body primarily intended for merchandise or property. §316.614(6)(a), (c) & (d)

<sup>2</sup>This requirement does not apply to persons operating the following types of vehicles: (1) School bus; (2) a bus used to transport persons for compensation; (3) a farm tractor or other implement of husbandry; (4) a truck weighing > 5,000 lbs.; and, (5) motorcycles, mopeds or bicycles. §§316.613(2) & 316.614(3)(a)

<sup>3</sup>For either a nonmoving or moving traffic infraction, an offender may elect to have a charge adjudicated before a hearing officer. A person electing adjudication waives any rights they may have to the civil penalties in §318.18. The hearing officer is authorized to impose a fine of not more than \$500 or require a person to attend a driver improvement school. §318.14(5)

<sup>4</sup>**Possible Licensing Action.** For any violation of the traffic laws, the court has the authority to either suspend or revoke a driver's license if the court determines that there exists a need to protect persons who use the highways. In determining whether to take such action, the court considers among other things the extent or nature of the violation and whether, as a result of the violation there was either a death, personal injury or property damage. §316.655(2) Note: This provision does not provide for specific license suspension or revocation periods. However, under §322.28(1), the licensing agency can only suspend or revoke a license for 1 year. In addition, the licensing agency may be able to issue driving privileges for employment purposes under §322.271.

**FLORIDA**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Requirements: (continued)

integrated child seat or a seat belt.<sup>5</sup> §316.613(1)(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Moving Violation<sup>3</sup>: A fine of **\$60** with cost courts of **\$10**.  
§§316.613(5) and 318.18(3)(a) & (11) In addition, 3 points are  
assessed against a driver's record.<sup>4</sup> §316.613(5)

**Alternative Sanction.** In lieu of the above fine and point sanctions, a  
person, with the court's approval, may elect to participate in a child  
restraint safety program. §316.613(5)

Effect on Civil Liability:

The failure to provide and use a child passenger restraint shall not be  
considered comparative negligence, nor shall such failure be admissible  
as evidence in the trial of any civil action with regard to negligence.  
§316.613(3)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear<sup>6</sup>:

Requirements:

No person shall operate or ride on a motorcycle unless they are wearing  
protective headgear which complies with State standards. §316.211(1)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Nonmoving Traffic Violation<sup>3</sup>: A fine of **\$30** with court costs of **\$6**.<sup>4</sup>  
§§316.655(1), 318.14 and 318.18(2) & (11)

Note: Failure to wear protective headgear may be considered as  
comparative negligence if it can be shown that such a failure was the  
proximate cause of the injuries sustained. *Rex Utilities, Inc. v. Gaddy*,  
413 So.2d 1232 (Fla.App. 3 Dist. 1982), & *Currie v. Palm Beach  
County*, 578 So.2d 760 (Fla.App. 4 Dist. 1991)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device<sup>6</sup>:

Requirements:

No person shall operate a motorcycle unless they are wearing an eye-  
protection device which complies with State standards. §316.211(2)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Nonmoving Traffic Violation<sup>3</sup>: A fine of **\$30** with court costs of **\$6**.<sup>4</sup>  
§§316.655(1), 318.14 and 318.18(2) & (11)

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<sup>5</sup>**Bicycles.** A bicycle rider while transporting a child, who is either <4 years old or weights ≤40 lbs., must secure such child in a seat or carrier that is designed to carry children of that age or weight for the purpose of protecting such a child from the bicycle's moving parts. §316.2065(3)(b) A violation of this requirement appears to be a nonmoving violation with a fine of **\$30** with court costs of **\$6**. §§318.14(1) and 318.18(2) & (11)

<sup>6</sup>This requirement does not apply under the following circumstances: (1) To persons ≥16 years old who are operating or riding within an enclosed cab; and, to persons ≥16 years old who are operating or riding upon a motorcycle either (1) with a displacement of ≤50 cubic centimeters, (2) with ≤2 brake horsepower or (3) with a speed capability of ≤30 MPH. §316.211(3)

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements: A bicycle rider or passenger < 16 years old must wear a nationally approved bicycle safety helmet.<sup>7</sup> §316.2065(3)(d)

Sanctions for Failure to Use: Nonmoving Traffic Violation<sup>3</sup>: A fine of \$30 with court costs of \$6.<sup>8</sup> §§316.2065(3)(e) and 318.18(2) & (11)

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements: None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements: No person shall ride upon any portion of a vehicle that is not intended for passenger use. §316.2015(2)

Sanctions for a Violation: Nonmoving Traffic Violation<sup>3</sup>: A fine of \$30 with \$6 court costs.<sup>4</sup> §§316.2015(2) and 318.18(2) & (11)

Exemptions: This prohibition does not apply to an employee engaged in the discharge of official duties or to a person riding within truck bodies in a space intended for merchandise. §316.2015(2)

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<sup>7</sup>The failure of a person to wear a bicycle helmet or the failure of a parent or guardian to prevent a child from riding a bicycle without a bicycle helmet may not be considered evidence of negligence or contributory negligence. §316.2065(19)

<sup>8</sup>Note: Prior to January 1, 1998, a law enforcement officer or crossing guard only issued a bicycle safety brochure and a verbal warning to riders or passengers who violated this requirement. §316.2065(3)(e)



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

GEORGIA  
Code of Georgia Annotate (Code of 1981)

Required Use of Safety Belts:

Requirements:

I. While being transported in a motor vehicle<sup>1</sup>, each front seat passenger must be restrained by a Federally approved safety belt.<sup>2</sup> §40-8-76.1(b)  
II. A driver transporting a minor<sup>3</sup> >4 years old must secure such child in a Federally approved safety belt. §40-8-76.1(e)(3)

**Enforcement.** (1) Probable cause for a violation of these requirements must be based upon a law enforcement officer's clear and unobstructed view of the unrestrained person. (2) A violation of these requirements cannot constitute probable cause of any other violation of the law. §40-8-76.1(f)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

I. For a violation of I above, a fine of not more than \$15.<sup>4</sup> §40-8-76.1(e)(2)

II. For a violation of II above, a fine of not more than \$25.<sup>4</sup> §40-8-76.1(e)(3)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to comply with these requirements shall not (1) be considered evidence of negligence, (2) be considered by the court on any question of liability of any persons, corporation or insurer, (3) be any basis for cancellation of coverage or increase in insurance rates and (4) diminish any recovery for damages arising out of the ownership, maintenance, occupancy or operation of a passenger vehicle. §40-8-76.1(d)

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<sup>1</sup>For the purposes of the safety belt requirement, a "motor vehicle" means either a vehicle designed to carry 10 or less passengers or pickup trucks with occupants who are < 18 years old. However, the term does not include pickup trucks (except as previously noted), motorcycles or motor driven cycles. §40-8-76.1(a)

<sup>2</sup>**Exemptions.** The safety belt use requirement for front seat occupants, who are not minors, does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To operators or passengers of a motor vehicle making frequent stops to deliver property provided the speed of the vehicle between stops is ≤ 15 MPH; (2) to operators or passengers who are unable to use a safety belt due to medical, physical or other valid reasons; (3) to persons operating passenger vehicles in reverse; (4) to persons riding in vehicles with a model year prior to 1965; (5) to persons riding in vehicles that are not required to have safety belts under Federal law; (6) to rural letter carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while performing official duties; (7) to persons delivering newspapers; and, (8) to persons performing emergency services. §40-8-76.1(c)

<sup>3</sup>The age of legal majority is 18. Until then, a person is considered a minor. §39-1-1(a)

<sup>4</sup>A violation of this provision is not to be considered a criminal act and is not to be considered a moving violation for purposes of licensing action under §40-5-57. §40-8-76.1(e)(1)

## GEORGIA

### Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>5</sup>:

#### Requirements:

A person transporting a child  $\leq 4$  years old in a motor vehicle<sup>6</sup> shall secure such child in a Federally approved child passenger restraint system. However, for children, who are either 3 or 4 years old, this requirement is satisfied if they are restrained in a seat belt. §40-8-76(b)(1)

#### Sanctions for Failure to Require the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

1st offense-A fine of not more than \$50. 2nd or subsequent offense-A fine of not more than \$100. For either a 1st of subsequent offense, the court is prohibited from imposing additional fees or surcharges. §40-8-76(2) Note: It appears that no points are assigned for a violation of this requirement.

#### Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of this requirement shall not constitute negligence per se nor contributory negligence per se.<sup>7</sup> §40-8-76(d)

### Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear<sup>8</sup>:

#### Requirements:

No person shall operate or ride upon a motorcycle unless they are wearing protective headgear that has been approved by the State.<sup>9</sup> §40-6-315(a)

#### Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: An imprisonment sentence of not more than 12 months and/or a fine of not more than \$1,000.<sup>10</sup> §§17-10-3(a)(1) & 40-6-1 Note: It appears that no points are assigned for a violation of this requirement.

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<sup>5</sup>**Bicycles.** I. A child  $< 1$  year old cannot be transported on a bicycle unless they are transported either on a bicycle trailer or in an infant sling. §40-6-292(c) II. A child  $\geq 1$  but  $\leq 4$  years old cannot be transported on a bicycle unless they are transported either in a child passenger bicycle seat, on a bicycle trailer or in an infant sling. §40-6-292(c) The law specifically provides that a person  $< 16$  years old, who violates these provisions, is subject to neither an imprisonment sentence nor a fine. §40-6-292(f) However, it is misdemeanor for a parent or guardian to knowingly permit a child or ward to violate this provision. §40-6-298(b) The sanctions of this offense are an imprisonment sentence of not more than 12 months and/or a fine of not more than \$1,000. §17-10-3(a)(1) A violation of these provisions shall not constitute negligence per se nor contributory negligence per se or be considered evidence of negligence or liability. §40-6-292(f)

<sup>6</sup>For purposes of this requirement, motor vehicle includes either a passenger automobile, van or pickup truck. However, this term does not include a taxicab or public transit vehicle. §40-8-769(b)(1)

<sup>7</sup>Note: A violation of this requirement shall not be the basis for cancellation of coverage or increase in insurance rates. §40-8-76(d)

<sup>8</sup>Note: Failure to wear protective headgear is negligence as a matter of law (i.e., negligence per se). *Green v. Gaydon*, 331 S.E.2d 106 (Ga.App. 1985)

<sup>9</sup>This requirement does not apply to either (1) to operators or passengers who are riding within an enclosed cab or motorized cart or (2) to persons who are operating three-wheeled motorcycle used only for agricultural purposes. §40-6-315(c)

<sup>10</sup>An additional fine equal to 5% of the original fine is imposed and deposited into the Peace Officer's Annuity and Benefit Fund. §15-21-131

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

If a motorcycle is not equipped with a windshield, no person shall operate or ride on such vehicle unless they are wearing an eye-protective device.<sup>9</sup> §40-6-315(b)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: An imprisonment sentence of not more than **12 months** and/or a fine of not more than **\$1,000**.<sup>10</sup> §§17-10-3(a)(1) & 40-6-1  
Note: It appears that no points are assigned for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

When either operating or riding on a bicycle, a person <16 years old shall wear a bicycle helmet that complies with nationally recognized standards.<sup>11</sup> §40-6-296(e)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

I. The law specifically provides that a person <16 years old, who violates this provision, is subject to neither an imprisonment sentence nor a fine. §40-6-296(6)  
II. However, it is misdemeanor for a parent or guardian to knowingly permit a child or ward to violate this provision. §40-6-298(b) The sanctions of this offense are an imprisonment sentence of not more than **12 months** and/or a fine of not more than **\$1,000**.<sup>10</sup> §17-10-3(a)(1)

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

A person <18 years old shall not ride in the uncovered bed of a pickup truck on any interstate highway. §40-8-79

Sanctions for a Violation:

A driver, who allows a person <18 years old to ride in a pickup truck in violation of this prohibition, commits a misdemeanor. The sanctions for this offense are an imprisonment term of not more than **12 months** and/or a fine of not more than **\$1,000**.<sup>10</sup> §§17-10-3(a)(1) & 40-8-79  
Note: It appears that no points are assigned for a violation of this requirement.

Exemptions:

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<sup>11</sup>A violation of this requirement shall not constitute negligence per se nor contributory negligence per se or be considered evidence of negligence of liability. §40-6-296(5)



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

HAWAII  
Hawaii Revised Statutes

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. Before operating a motor vehicle, a driver shall restrain themselves and any front seat passengers  $\geq 4$  but  $< 15$  years old in a Federally approved seat belt. §291-11.6(a)(1)
- II. Before a motor vehicle is operated, a front seat passenger  $\geq 15$  years old shall restrain themselves in a Federally approved seat belt. §291-11.6(a)(2)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

A fine of \$20. §291-11.6(e)

Effect on Civil Liability:

The enactment of the safety belt law does not change existing law concerning personal injury civil actions related to vehicle accidents.<sup>2</sup> §291-11.6(d)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>3</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. Before transporting a child  $< 3$  years old in a motor vehicle, the vehicle operator must secure such child in a child passenger restraint system approved by the Federal Government. §291-11.5(a)(1)
- II. Before transporting a child  $\geq 3$  but  $< 4$  years old in a motor vehicle, the vehicle operator must secure such child either in a child passenger restraint system approved by the Federal Government or in a seat belt assembly. §291-11.5(a)(2)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Violation: 1st offense-A fine of not more than \$200 2nd offense (within 1 year)-A fine of not more than \$300 3rd or subsequent offense (within 1 year)-A fine of not more than \$500 §§291-11.5(e) & 291C-161(b)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** I. Passengers of either emergency vehicles while on official duties (ambulances, firefighting equipment, rescue vehicles and police vehicles) or mass transportation vehicles with a gross vehicles weight rating  $> 10,000$  lbs. (bus, school bus excluding a charter or sightseeing service bus) are exempt from the seat belt requirement. §291-11.6(b)

II. The seat belt use requirement does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons riding in motor vehicles that do not have to have a safety belt under Federal law; (2) to persons who are unable to use a seat belt because all of the available safety belt assemblies are in use; (3) to persons who have a condition that prevents the appropriate use of a seat belt; (4) to persons operating taxicabs. §291-11.6(c)

<sup>2</sup>The Hawaii Supreme Court has indirectly held that a person has no common law duty to mitigate damages by wearing a safety belt. *Kealoha v. County of Hawaii*, 844 P.2d 670 (Hawaii 1993)

<sup>3</sup>**Exemptions.** Operators of emergency, commercial and mass transit vehicles are exempt from the child safety seat requirement. §291-11.5(b) In addition, this requirement does not apply if the number of children to be secured exceeds the number of available seat belt assemblies in the vehicles. However, children that are not secured must be placed in the back seat of the motor vehicle. §291-11.5(c)

**HAWAII**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Effect on Civil Liability: Failure to comply with this requirement is not considered contributory negligence, comparative negligence or negligence per se. §291-11.5(d)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements: No person < 18 years old shall operate or ride on a motorcycle unless they are wearing a State approved safety helmet.<sup>5</sup> §286-81(a)(3) & (b)

Sanctions for Failure to Use: A fine of not more than **\$1,000**. §286-82

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device<sup>6</sup>:

Requirements: No person shall operate or ride on a motorcycle unless they wear safety glasses, goggles or a face shield. §286-81(a)(1)(A)

Sanctions for Failure to Use: A fine of not more than **\$1,000**. §286-82

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements: None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements: None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

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<sup>4</sup>The requirement to use a safety helmet does not apply if the motorcycle (1) has three wheels, (2) is powered by an electric motor, (3) has a full body enclosed cab or (4) has a seat belt assembly or a child restraint system which must used when the vehicle is in motion. §286-81(c)

**Persons Under 7 Years Old.** A motorcycle operator shall not carry a child < 7 years old on a motorcycle unless such vehicle (1) has three wheels, (2) is powered by an electric motor, (3) has a full body enclosed cab or (4) has a seat belt assembly or a child restraint system which must used when the vehicle is in motion. §291-11(a) & (b) A motorcycle operator, who violates this provision, is subject to a fine on not more than **\$200**. §291-11(c)

<sup>5</sup>The Hawaii Supreme Court has held that a person has no common law duty to mitigate damages by wearing a motorcycle safety helmet. *Kealoha v. County of Hawaii*, 844 P.2d 670 (Hawaii 1993)

<sup>6</sup>The requirement to use an eye protection device does not apply if the motorcycle has a windscreen or windshield. §286-81(a)(1)(A)

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

- I. No person shall stand in the bed or load-carrying area of a pickup truck<sup>7</sup> while such vehicle is in motion. §291-14(a)
- II. A driver of a pickup truck<sup>7</sup> shall not allow a passenger to ride seated in the bed of such a truck unless the following three conditions are satisfied: (1) There no seats available in the vehicle's cab; (2) the side racks and the tailgate are respectively securely attached and securely closed; and, (3) the passengers in the bed are seated on the floor and do not attempt to unlash any cargo. §291-14(a)
- III. A person shall not operate a pickup truck<sup>7</sup> while any passenger ≤ 12 years old is in the bed or load-carrying area of the vehicle. §291-14(c)

Sanctions for a Violation:

- I. For a violation of either I or II above, there is a fine of \$25. §291-14(d)
- II. For a violation of III above, there is a fine of \$50. §291-14(d)

Exemptions:

These requirements do not apply to persons or corporations that are operating a business that serves the public or are under the supervision of State or local authorities that regulate employees while they carry out their duties. §291-14(b)

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<sup>7</sup>For the purposes of this prohibition, a "pickup truck" is defined as "a light truck that has a cab on the front part of the vehicle covering the driver's seat and an open bed behind the cab designed primarily to transport property or cargo, with sides and a tailgate to retain the contents within the confines of the bed, and has a maximum gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 11,000 pounds or less." §291-14(e)



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

IDAHO  
Idaho Code (General Laws of Idaho Annotated)

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

All front seat occupants of a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> shall be secured in a safety belt when the vehicle is in motion. §49-673(1)

**Possible Secondary Enforcement.** It appears that a person can only be fined for a safety belt violation which is associated with another some other traffic infraction. §49-673(3) As such, enforcement of this provision must be in conjunction with some other traffic law violation.

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Infraction: A fine of \$5<sup>3</sup>. §49-673(3) Note: A conviction for this infraction shall neither result in points being assigned to a person's driving record nor be deemed a moving violation for the purpose of establishing rates of motor vehicle insurance. §49-673(3)

Effect on Civil Liability:

The failure to use a safety belt shall not be considered any circumstances as evidence of contributory or comparative negligence, nor shall such failure be admissible as evidence in any civil action with regard to negligence. §49-673(6)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

A person, transporting a child <4 years old and weighing <40 lbs. in a noncommercial motor vehicle, shall secure such child in a "car safety seat" that meets Federal requirements. §49-672(1)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Infraction: A fine of not more than \$100. §§18-113A, 49-110(4) & 49-236(2) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** This requirement does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons who are unable to use a safety belt for medical reasons; (2) to persons riding on motorcycles, using implements of husbandry and occupying emergency vehicles; (3) to persons riding in the front seat of a motor vehicle when all of the available safety belts are already in use; and, (4) to mail carriers. §49-673(2)

<sup>2</sup>This requirement applies only to motor vehicles which have a gross vehicle weight of ≤8,000 lbs. §49-673(1)

<sup>3</sup>Note: The law is not clear as to whether the safety belt use law is only enforceable as a part of some other law enforcement activity or whether such law can be enforced on its own. If the safety belt use law is only enforceable as a part of some other activity, the law appears to provide for just a \$5 fine. §49-673(3) However, if this law can be enforced as a separate independent infraction, a violator could be subject to a fine of not more than \$100. §§18-113A, 49-110(4) & 49-236(2)

<sup>4</sup>**Exemptions.** This requirement does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) If all of the vehicle's seat belts are in use ( however, the child must be placed in the vehicle's rear seat); or, (2) if the child is held by an attendant for the purpose of nursing the child or attending the child's other immediate physiological needs. §49-672(1)(a) & (b)

**IDAHO**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Effect on Civil Liability:

The failure to use a child safety seat shall not be considered under any circumstances as evidence of contributory negligence, nor shall such failure be admissible in any civil action with regard to negligence. §49-672(2)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

No person < 18 years old shall operate or ride on a motorcycle unless they are wearing a State approved protective safety helmet. §49-666

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Infraction: A fine of not more than **\$100**. §§18-113A, 49-110(4) & 49-236(2) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

ILLINOIS  
West's Smith-Hurd Illinois Compiled Statutes Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

I. A driver and front seat passengers shall wear safety belts when a motor vehicle is in operation.<sup>2</sup> §625 ILCS 5/12-603.1(a)  
II. A driver, who is <18 years old, and each of such driver's passengers, who are <18 years old, must wear a safety belt when a motor vehicle is in operation.<sup>3</sup> §625 ILCS 5/12-603.1(a)  
III. A motor vehicle operator transporting a child ≥6 but <16 years old shall secure such child in a safety belt. §625 ILCS 5/12-603.1(a)  
**Secondary Enforcement.** No motor vehicle driver or passenger shall be stopped or searched by a law enforcement officer solely on the basis of a violation or suspected violation of these requirements.<sup>4</sup> §625 ILCS 5/12-603.1(e)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Petty Offense: A fine of not more than \$25.<sup>2</sup> §625 ILCS 5/12-603.1(d)  
Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of these requirements.

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to wear a seat belt in violation of the law shall not be considered evidence of negligence, shall not limit the liability of an insurer and shall not diminish any recovery for damages arising out of the ownership, maintenance or operation of a motor vehicle. §625 ILCS 5/12-603.1(c)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To a driver or passengers who are operating or riding in a motor vehicle that makes frequent stops for the purpose of delivering property and provided the speed of the vehicle between stops is ≤15 MPH; (2) to drivers and passengers who for medical or physical reasons cannot wear seat belts; (3) to a driver operating a motor vehicle in reverse; (4) to persons operating or riding in motor vehicles either with a model year prior to 1965 or that are not required by Federal law to have seat belts; and, (5) to persons operating or riding on motorcycles, motor driven cycles, or motorized pedalcycles. §625 ILCS 5/12-603.1(b)

<sup>2</sup>**School Bus Operators.** "No school bus shall be operated unless the driver has properly restrained himself with the lap belt assembly." §625 ILCS 5/12-807 A person, who is convicted of violating this requirement, is subject to the following sanctions. Either a 1st or 2nd violation of this requirement is a Petty Offense with a fine of not more than \$500. A 3rd violation (within 1 year) is a Class C Misdemeanor with an incarceration term of not more than 30 days and/or a fine of not more than \$500. §§625 ILCS 5/16-101 & 16-104 and §§730 ILCS 5/5-8-3(a)(3) & 5-9-1(a)(3)

<sup>3</sup>I. Under separate provisions of law, a person <18 years old is not to operate a motor vehicle either with more than one passenger in the front seat or with more passengers in the back seats than there are safety belts. A driver less than 18 years old when operating a second division vehicle, that has only a front seat and that weights ≤8,000 lbs., may transport more than one person in the front seat provided each passenger is wearing a safety belt. §625 ILCS 5/12-603(b-5) II. A person violating these requirements is subject to the following sanctions. A 1st and 2nd offense is a Petty Offense and the offender is subject to a fine of not more than \$1,000. A 3rd or subsequent offense (within 1 year) is a Class C Misdemeanor and the offender is subject to an imprisonment term of not more than 30 days and/or a fine of not more than \$1,500. §§625 ILCS 5/16-104, 730 ILCS 5/5-8-3(a)(3) and 730 ILCS 5/5-9-1(a)(3) & (4)

<sup>4</sup>An appellate court has created a judicial exception to this requirement. If a vehicle has been stopped at a vehicle safety checkpoint, the driver (or passengers) may be issued a citation for failure to wear a safety belt. In brief, the court reasoned that the initial stop was not solely for the purpose of safety belt law enforcement and, consequently, a citation for non belt use could be issued. *People v. Edwards*, 673 N.E.2d 752 (Ill.App. 3 Dist. 1996)

**ILLINOIS**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>5</sup>:

Requirements:

I. A person transporting a child <4 years old in a motor vehicle<sup>6</sup> shall secure such child in a child restraint system that has been approved by the Federal Government.<sup>7</sup> §625 ILCS 25/4

II. A person transporting a child ≥4 but <6 years old shall secure such child either in a child restraint system that has been approved by the Federal Government or a seat belt. §625 ILCS 25/4a

III. A person, who is <18 years old, when transporting a child, who is ≥6 but <18 years old, must secure such child in a safety belt. §626 ILCS 25/4b

Sanctions for Failure to Require the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Petty Offense: 1st offense-A fine of not more than \$25 Subsequent offense-A fine of not more than \$50 §625 ILCS 25/6 Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of these requirements.

Effect on Civil Liability:

In no event shall a person's failure to secure a child as provided by law constitute contributory negligence or be admissible as evidence in the trial of any civil action. §625 ILCS 25/5

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None<sup>8</sup>

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

A person who operates or rides on a motorcycle, motor driven cycle or motorized pedalcycle must be protected by glasses, goggles or a transparent shield.<sup>9</sup> §625 ILCS 5/11-1404(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

1st & 2nd offenses (petty offense)-A fine of not more than \$1,000 3rd or subsequent offense (within 1 years) (Class C Misdemeanor)-An imprisonment term of not more than 30 days and/or a fine of not more

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<sup>5</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a child passenger restraint system or seat belt does not apply with respect to children who have a physical disability of such a nature as to prevent the proper use of such a system or belt. §625 ILCS 25/7 (f3)

<sup>6</sup>For the purposes of this requirement, a "motor vehicle" means (1) a non-commercial motor vehicle of the first division, (2) a motor vehicle of the second division with a gross vehicle weight rating ≤9,000 lbs. or (3) a recreational vehicle. §625 ILCS 25/4

<sup>7</sup>For children <4 years old, the parent of legal guardian shall provide a child restraint system to any person who is transporting their child. A person, who transports a child of another that is not restrained in such a system, is not in violation of this requirement unless such a system was provided to the person. §625 ILCS 25/4

<sup>8</sup>Failure to wear protective headgear is not considered to be comparative negligence and thus cannot be used as evidence to mitigate damages. *Hukill v. DiGregorio*, 484 N.E.2d 795 (Ill.App. 2 Dist. 1985)

<sup>9</sup>Contact lenses are not acceptable eye protection devices. §625 ILCS 5/11-1404(c)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Use: (continued)

than \$1,500 §§625 ILCS 5/16-104, 730 ILCS 5/5-8-3(a)(3) and 730 ILCS 5/5-9-1(a)(3) & (4) Five (5) points are assessed against a persons's driving record a violation of this requirement. 92 Illinois Administrative Code §1040.20(c)

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:



**JURISDICTION:**  
General Reference:

**INDIANA**  
Burn's Indiana Statutes Annotated and Indiana Administrative Code (IAC)

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

When a passenger motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> is in motion, the driver and every front seat passenger shall be secured in a safety belt. §9-19-10-2  
**Secondary Enforcement.** A person may not be stopped, inspected or detained solely to determine compliance with this requirement. §9-19-10-3

Sanctions for Failure to Use or Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Class D Infraction: A fine of not more than \$25. §§9-19-10-8(a) & 34-4-32-4(d) Note: Points may not be assessed against a person's driving record for a violation of this requirement. §9-19-10-8(b)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to comply with this requirement does not constitute fault and does not limit the liability of an insurer. §9-19-10-7(a) Except in product liability situations, a failure to comply with this requirement may not be admitted in an civil action to mitigate damages. §9-19-10-7(b) & (c)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>3</sup>:

Requirements:

I. Before operating a motor vehicle, a driver must secure a child <3 years old in a child passenger restraint system. §9-19-11-2  
II. Before operating a motor vehicle, a driver must secure a child who is either 3 or 4 years old in either a child passenger restraint system or a seat belt. §9-19-11-3

Sanctions for Failure to Require the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Class C Infraction: A fine of not more than \$500.<sup>4</sup> §§9-19-11-2, 9-19-11-3 & 34-4-32-4(c) Note: An abstract of violation of this requirement

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to wear a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons who cannot wear a safety belt for medical reasons; (2) to children who are required to use a child passenger restraint system; (3) to persons traveling in commercial or U.S. Postal Service vehicles that make frequent stops for the purpose of picking up or delivering goods and services; (4) to rural letter carries of the U.S. Postal Service when performing official duties; (5) to persons delivering newspapers; and, (6) to persons performing the duties of a driver license examiner. §9-19-10-1

<sup>2</sup>The requirement to wear a safety belt does not apply if the motor vehicle is not required to be equipped with safety belts. §9-19-10-2 Note: For the purpose for safety belt usage, the term "passenger motor vehicle" is defined as "a motor vehicle designed for carrying passengers." The term includes buses, school buses and private buses but excludes trucks, tractors and recreational vehicles. §9-13-2-123

<sup>3</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement that certain children use either a child passenger restraint system or seat belt does not apply to drivers operating either (1) a school bus, (2) a taxicab, (3) a rental vehicle for ≤30 days, (4) an ambulance, (5) vehicles not registered in Indiana and operated for ≤60 days, (6) a public passenger bus, (7) a vehicle with a seating capacity >9 individuals and owned by a religious or not-for-profit organization, (8) an antique motor vehicle, (9) a motorcycle, (10) a motor vehicle owned or leased by a governmental unit and that is being used for law enforcement duties and (11) a motor vehicle that is being used in an emergency. §9-19-11-1

<sup>4</sup>This sanction does not apply to first offenders who possess a child passenger restraint system. §9-19-11-5

INDIANA

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

is forwarded to the bureau of motor vehicles for inclusion in the person's driving record. §9-19-11-7 Four (4) points are assessed against a person's driving record. 140 IAC §1-4.5-10

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to comply with this requirement does not constitute contributory negligence. §9-19-11-8

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

A person <18 years old shall wear State approved protective headgear when operating or riding on a motorcycle or motorized bicycle. §§9-19-7-1(1), 9-21-10-9 & 9-21-11-13

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Class C Infraction: A fine of not more than \$500. §§9-19-7-3, 9-21-11-14 & 34-4-32-4(c) Four (4) points are assessed against a person's driving record. 140 IAC §1-4.5-10

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

A person <18 years old shall wear protective glasses, goggles or transparent face shield when operating or riding on a motorcycle or motorized bicycle. §§9-19-7-1(2), 9-21-10-9 & 9-21-11-13

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Class C Infraction: A fine of not more than \$500. §§9-19-7-3, 9-21-11-14 & 34-4-32-4(c)

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

IOWA  
Iowa Code Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

When a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> is in forward motion, the driver and front seat passengers shall wear safety belts or safety harnesses. §321.445(2)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Simple Misdemeanor: A fine of **\$10**. §§321.482 & 805.8(2)(c) Note: In determining license suspension action, the State is not to consider a violation of this requirement. §321.210(2)(b)

Effect on Civil Liability:

The failure to comply with this requirement shall not be considered evidence of comparative fault. However, such failure may be admitted to mitigate damages.<sup>3</sup> §321.445(4)(b)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

I. A child <3 years old, while being transported in a motor vehicle, shall be secured in a Federally approved child restraint system. §321.446(1)

II. A child ≥3 but <6 years old, while being transported in a motor vehicle, shall be secured in either a Federally approved child restraint system, a safety belt or a safety harness. §321.446(2)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Misdemeanor: A fine of **\$10**. §§321.446(4) & 805.8(2)(x) Note: In determining license suspension action, the State is not to consider a violation of this requirement. §321.210(2)(b)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to use a child restraint system, safety belt or safety harness does not constitute negligence nor is such failure admissible as evidence in a civil action. §321.446(6)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to wear a safety belt or safety harness does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons driving or riding in vehicles that are not required to have safety belts; (2) to drivers or passengers who are frequently alighting or reentering a motor vehicle for employment purposes and where the vehicle does not exceed 25 MPH between stops; (3) to letter carriers of the U.S. Postal Service when performing their duties; (4) to passengers on a bus; (5) to persons, who for medical or physical reasons, cannot wear a safety belt; and (6) except for the driver, front seat occupants of an emergency vehicle when such occupants are being transported in an emergency. §321.445(2)

<sup>2</sup>A "motor vehicle" does not include a motorcycle or motorized bicycle. §321.445(2)

<sup>3</sup>The defendant in a civil action (1) must introduce "substantial evidence" that the failure to use a safety belt or safety harness contributed to the plaintiff's injuries and (2), if such is established, the plaintiff's recovery may be reduced by 5%. §321.445(4)(b)(1) & (2)

<sup>4</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirements of §321.446 do not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To law enforcement officers acting on official duty; (2) to children riding in motor vehicles with a model year of 1965 or older; (3) to children riding in authorized emergency vehicles; (4) to children who have a medical, physical or mental condition that prevents or makes inadvisable the securing of a child in a child restraint system, safety belt or safety harness. §321.446(3)

**IOWA**

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements: **None**

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements: **None**

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements: **None**

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements: **None**

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements: A passenger shall not ride on any part of any vehicle unless it is expressly designed either for passenger use or designed for carrying livestock, merchandise or freight. §321.455

Sanctions for a Violation: Simple Misdemeanor: A fine of \$25. §§321.482 & 805.8(2)(m)

Exemptions:

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

KANSAS  
Kansas Statutes Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

When a passenger car<sup>2</sup> is in operation, each front seat passenger must be secured in a safety belt. §8-2503(a)

**Secondary Enforcement.** A law enforcement shall not stop a vehicle for a violation of this requirement in the absence of another violation of the law. A citation for a violation of this requirement cannot be issued unless a citation is issued for the violation which caused the stop. §8-2503(e)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

A fine of \$10. §8-2504(a)(2) A court is not to report a violation of this requirement to the department of revenue. §8-2504(b)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Evidence of failure to use a safety belt shall not be admissible in any action for the purpose of determining any aspect of comparative negligence or mitigation of damages. §8-2504(c)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:

Requirements:

I. A driver of a passenger car<sup>2</sup> shall properly restrain a child < 4 years old in a Federally approved child safety restraining system. §8-1344(a) & (b)

II. A driver of a passenger car<sup>2</sup> shall properly restrain a child > 4 but < 14 years old in a in a safety belt.<sup>3</sup> §8-1344(b)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

A fine of \$20. Note: A violation of this requirement is not a moving violation of licensing sanctions purposes. §8-1345(a)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Evidence of failure to secure a child as required shall not be admissible in any action for the purpose of determining any aspect of comparative negligence or mitigation of damages. §8-1345(d) In addition, failure to employ a child passenger restraint system shall not constitute negligence per se. §8-1346

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To passengers who are unable to wear a safety belt for medical reasons; (2) to carriers of U.S. mail when on actual duty delivering and collecting the mail; (3) to persons who are in the process of delivering newspapers; and, (4) to persons who are required to be secured in a child passenger restraint system.

<sup>2</sup>A "passenger car" is defined as a motor vehicle (including vans) designed to carry ≤ 10 persons. However, such definition does not include a motorcycle, a trailer or a vehicle constructed either on a truck chassis with a gross vehicle weight of > 12,000 lbs. or a farm truck with a gross weight > 16,000 lbs. §§8-1343a & 8-2502

<sup>3</sup>This requirement does not apply if all of the available seating positions with safety belts are occupied. §8-1344(b)

**KANSAS**

**Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:**

**Requirements:**

No person < 18 years old shall operate or ride upon a motorcycle or motorized bicycle unless they are wearing a helmet that satisfies Federal standards. §8-1598(a) This requirement does not apply if the person is riding in an enclosed cab, golf cart or industrial (cargo-type) vehicle having 3 wheels (i.e., a truckster). §8-1598(c)

**Sanctions for Failure to Use:**

**Traffic Infraction: A fine of \$10. §§8-2116(a) & 8-2118(c)**

**Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device<sup>4</sup>:**

**Requirements:**

No person shall operate a motorcycle unless they are wearing an eye-protection device (i.e., protective glasses, goggles or transparent shields which are shatter proof and impact resistant). This requirement does not apply if the motorcycle is equipped with a windscreen. §8-1598(b)

**Sanctions for Failure to Use:**

**Traffic Infraction: A fine of \$10. §§8-2116(a) & 8-2118(c)**

**Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:**

**Requirements:**

**None**

**Sanctions for Failure to Use:**

**Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:**

**Requirements:**

**None**

**Sanctions for Failure to Use:**

**Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:**

**Requirements:**

I. A person < 14 years old is prohibited from riding upon any portion of a vehicle not designed to intended for passenger use. §8-1578a(a)  
II. A driver is not to allow a person < 14 years old to ride upon any portion of a vehicle not designed to intended for passenger use. §8-1578a(b)

**Note:** The above requirements only apply when the vehicle is being operated within the corporate limits of a city or on the State highway system. §8-1578a(d)

**Sanctions for a Violation:**

**Traffic Infraction: A fine of \$20. §§8-2116(a) & 8-2118(c)**

**Exemptions:**

This requirement does not apply (1) to an employee < 14 years old who is engaged in the necessary discharge of an employer's duties within a truck body which is intend for merchandise or cargo or (2) vehicles being operated in parades, caravans or exhibitions. §8-1578a(c)

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<sup>4</sup>This requirement does not apply to persons who are riding within an enclosed cab, a golf cart or any industrial (e.g., cargo-type) vehicle which has three wheels and which is commonly known as a truckster. §8-1598(c)

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

KENTUCKY  
Kentucky Revised Statutes

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

No person shall operate a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> (manufactured after 1965) unless the driver and all passengers are wearing seat belts. §189.125(6) **Secondary Enforcement.** A law enforcement officer shall not stop or seize a person nor issue a citation for a violation of this requirement unless the officer has stopped or seized the person for some other violation of the law. §189.125(7)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

A fine of not more than **\$25**. §189.990(25) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure of any person to wear a seat belt shall not constitute negligence per se.<sup>3</sup> §189.125(5)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:

Requirements:

When transporting a child  $\leq 40$  inches in height, a driver of a motor vehicles<sup>2</sup> shall secure such child in a Federally approved child restraint system. §189.125(3) & (4)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

A fine of **\$50**. §189.990(24) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to wear a child passenger restraint shall not be considered as contributory negligence, nor shall such failure be admissible as evidence in the trial of any civil action. §189.125(5)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

No person shall operate or ride on a motorcycle unless they wear State approved protective headgear. §189.285(2)(c)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

A fine of not less than **\$20** nor more than **\$100**. §189.993(12) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** This requirement does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons who, because of medical or physical conditions, cannot wear a seat belt; and, (2) to letter carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while they are performing their duties. §189.125(6)

<sup>2</sup>A "motor vehicle" includes vehicles that is designed to carry  $\leq 10$  persons and that was manufactured after 1965. However, the term does not include (1) motorcycles, (2) motor driven cycles or (3) farm trucks having a gross weight  $\geq 1$  ton. §189.125(1)

<sup>3</sup>In a case decided prior to the enactment of the safety belt use law, the State supreme court held that evidence of safety belt nonuse could be introduced for the jury's consideration in awarding damages to plaintiffs involved in automobile accidents. *Wemyss v. Coleman*, 729 S.W.2d 174 (Ky. 1987)

**KENTUCKY**

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

When operating a motorcycle, a person must use a State approved eye-protection device. §189.285(1)(b)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

A fine of not less than **\$20** nor more than **\$100**. §189.993(12) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

LOUISIANA  
West's Louisiana Statutes Annotated: Revised Statutes

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

When a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> is in forward motion, the driver and every front passenger shall wear a safety belt. §32:295.1(A) & (B)

**Enforcement.** No vehicle, the contents of the vehicle, or passenger in a vehicle shall be inspected, detained or searched solely because of a violation of this requirement.<sup>3</sup> §32:295.1(F)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

1st offense-A fine of \$25 including court costs 2nd offense-A fine of \$50 including court costs 3rd and subsequent offense-A fine of \$50 plus court costs §32:295.1(G)(1) Note: Notwithstanding any other provision of law, these are the only fines and costs that can be assessed against an offender. §32:295.1(G)(2)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to wear a safety belt shall not be considered evidence of comparative negligence and shall not be admitted to mitigate damages. §32:295.1(E)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

A State resident who transports a child <13 years old in a motor vehicle<sup>5</sup> shall secure such child in a Federally approved child passenger restraint system. §32:295(A) However, as an alternative, if the child is 3 to 12 years old, they may be secured in a lap or safety belt in the rear seat of the vehicle.<sup>6</sup> §32:295(C) Note: If the number of children

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To rural letters carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while performing official duties; (2) to persons operating a farm vehicle with 5 miles of its principal place of use; (3) to persons delivering newspapers; and, (3) to persons who have a physical or mental condition that prevents the use of a safety belt. §32:295.1(C) & (D)

<sup>2</sup>The requirement to use a safety belt applies to passenger cars, to vans, to trucks having gross vehicle weight ≤6,000 lbs. (commonly referred to as pickup trucks) and to autocycles. §32:295.1(A)(1), (A)(2) & (B)

<sup>3</sup>The State attorney general has determined that this provision allows law enforcement officers to initially stop a person, operating or riding in a motor vehicle, for a failure to wear a safety belt. However, the law prohibits further "inspection, detention, or search of a vehicle solely because the occupant" did not wear a safety belt. Op.Attn.Gen. No. 95-336, August 17, 1995

<sup>4</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use child passenger restraint requirement does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To children being transported in a motor vehicle that is being used as an ambulance or other emergency vehicle; (2) to adults or applicable children where an emergency exists which would threaten the life of any person; and, (3) to children who, because of medical reasons, cannot be secured in a child passenger safety system or safety belt. §32:295(E)

<sup>5</sup>The term "motor vehicle" does not include bicycle, farm tractor, motorcycle, motor-driven cycle, truck with a carrying capacity >2,000 lbs., ambulance (or other emergency vehicle), school bus, church bus, private bus, a recreational vehicle which can carry > 10 persons and commercial vehicles (truck, van or taxi). §32:295(B)

<sup>6</sup>If there are no rear seats, the child must be secured in an appropriate passenger restraint system. §32:295(C)

LOUISIANA

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Requirements: (continued)

to be secured exceeds the available seat belts, the children shall be seated in the vehicle's rear seat. §32:295(D)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

1st offense-A fine of \$50 2nd offense-A fine of \$100 3rd and subsequent offense-A fine of \$100 and all court costs<sup>7</sup> §32:295(H) In addition to any fine, a person, who violates these requirement is subject to having their driving privileges suspended. This suspension lasts until the they present proof to the court they have acquired an appropriate passenger restraint system. §32:295(H)

Note: The failure to use a child safety seat system shall not be considered a moving violation. §32:295(F)

Effect on Civil Liability:

The failure to secure a child passenger safety seat system shall not be considered as comparative negligence, nor shall such failure be admissible as evidence in the trial of any civil action with regard to negligence. §32:295(F)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear<sup>8</sup>:

Requirements:

No person shall operate or ride on a motorcycle, motor driven cycle or motorized bicycle unless they are wearing a State approved safety helmet. §32:190(A) Note: A person may obtain an exemption from this requirement when participating in authorized parades or other public exhibitions. §32:190(C)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

A fine of \$50 which includes all court costs. §32:190(F)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

No person shall operate a motorcycle, or motor driven cycle unless they are wearing a State approved eye protection device. This requirement does not apply if the vehicle is equipped with windshield. §32:190.1

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

1st offense-An imprisonment term of not more than 30 days and/or a fine of not more than \$175 Subsequent offense-An imprisonment term of not more than 90 days and/or a fine of not more than \$500 §32:57(A)

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

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<sup>7</sup>A person cannot be charged with a subsequent offense until after 24 hours have elapsed between offenses. §32:295(G)

<sup>8</sup>Failure to wear a safety helmet is considered negligence. As a result, a motorcycle operator or passenger, who is injured in a traffic accident while riding on a motorcycle without wearing appropriate headgear, can have any damages for injuries awarded to them reduced because of such a failure. *Landry v. Doe*, 597 So.2d 14 (La.App. 1 Cir. 1992)

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

A person < 12 years old is prohibited from riding (1) in the open bed of a truck with a gross weight of ≤6,000 lbs. (commonly referred to as a pickup truck) or (2) in a utility trailer. §32:284(C)

Sanctions for a Violation:

1st offense-An imprisonment term of not more than **30 days** and/or a fine of not more than **\$175** Subsequent offense-An imprisonment term of not more than **90 days** and/or a fine of not more than **500** §32:57(A)

Exemptions:

This prohibition does not apply (1) if the pickup truck is traveling ≤15 MPH and is participating in an authorized parade or (2) in emergency situations if the child is accompanied within the truck bed by an adult. §32:284(C)



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

MAINE  
Maine Revised Statutes Annotated (MRSA)

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. A vehicle<sup>2</sup> operator shall secure themselves in safety belt. Title 29-A MRSA §2081(3-A)
  - II. Vehicle<sup>2</sup> passengers  $\geq 18$  years old are responsible for securing themselves in a safety belt. Title 29-A MRSA §2081(3-A)
- Important.** See Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems below.
- Secondary Enforcement.** A law enforcement officer can only enforce a violation of Title 29-A MRSA §2081(3-A) after a vehicle operator has been detained for another violation of the law. Title 29-A MRSA §2081(4)(E)
- III. "The operator and passengers in a school bus equipped with safety seat belts shall wear those belts when the vehicle is in motion." Title 29-A MRSA §2304(4)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Traffic Infraction: For violation of either I or II above, a fine of not less than \$25 (mandatory) nor more than \$50. For a violation of III above, a fine of not less than \$25 nor more than \$500. Title 29-A MRSA §§103(3), 104 & 2081(4)(D) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of these requirements.

Effect on Civil Liability:

The non use of a seat belt by either the vehicle operator or a passenger is not admissible in evidence in a civil or criminal trial, except in a trial for a violation of this requirement. Title 29-A MRSA §2081(5)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. A vehicle<sup>2</sup> operator, when transporting a child  $< 4$  years old, must secure such child in a Federally approved child safety seat. Title 29-A MRSA §2081(1) & (2)
- II. A vehicle<sup>2</sup> operator must have persons  $\geq 4$  but  $< 18$  years secured in a child safety seat (or a safety belt). Title 29-A MRSA §2081(3)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

- I. A violation of I is a Traffic Infraction: A fine of not less than \$25 (mandatory) nor more than \$500. Title 29-A MRSA §§103(3), 104, 2081(4)(C) & 2604

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** I. These requirements do not apply under the following circumstances: (1) To passengers  $> 1$  year old if the number of passengers exceeds the number of available safety belts in the vehicle; and, (2) to drivers or passengers who for medical conditions cannot use a safety belt. Title 29-A MRSA §2081(4)(A) & (A-1) II. In addition, rural mail carriers of the U.S. Postal Service are not required to use safety belts when performing official duties. And, taxicab operators are not responsible for insuring that fee paying passengers wear a safety belt. Title 29-A MRSA §2081(6)(A) & (B)

<sup>2</sup>The requirement to use either a safety belt or child safety seat only applies to persons occupying vehicles that are required to be equipped with safety belts under Federal law. Title 29-A, §2081(2), (3) & (3-A)

MAINE

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems: (continued)

II. A violation of II is a Traffic Infraction: A fine of not less than \$25 (mandatory) nor more than \$50. Title 29-A MRSA §§104 & 2081(4)(D)

Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of these requirements.

Effect on Civil Liability:

The failure to secure a child in a child safety seat is not admissible in evidence in a civil or criminal trial, except in a trial for a violation of this requirement. Title 29-A MRSA §2081(5)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear<sup>3</sup>:

Requirements:

I. A person operating a motorcycle, motor driven cycle on a learner's permit or within 1 year of successfully completing a driving test must wear appropriate protective headgear. Title 29-A MRSA §2083(1)(C)

II. A person < 15 years old must wear appropriate protective headgear when riding as a passenger on a motorcycle, motor-driven cycle or an attached side car. Title 29-A MRSA §2083(1)(A)

III. A person < 15 years old, who is operating an off-road motorcycle or motor-driven cycle, must wear appropriate protective headgear. Title 29-A MRSA §2083(1)(B)

IV. A passenger of an operator, who is required to wear a protective headgear, must also wear such protection. Title 29-A MRSA §2083(1)(D)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Traffic Infraction: A fine of not less than \$25 (mandatory) nor more than \$500.<sup>4</sup> Title 29-A MRSA §§103(3), 104, 2083(5) & 2604 Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of these requirements.

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

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<sup>3</sup>In a case involving an all-terrain vehicle, a Federal appellate court has held that, under Maine law, failure to wear a helmet can be a bar to the recovery of damages if it can be shown that such a failure was responsible for the injuries. *Rodgers v. American Honda Motor Co.*, 46 F.3d 1 (1st Cir. 1995)

<sup>4</sup>This sanction applies to any operator, parent or guardian who allows a passenger < 15 years old to ride a vehicle in violation of these requirements. Title 29-A MRSA §2083(2)

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements: None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements: None

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

**MARYLAND**  
Annotated Code of Maryland Most references are to the Transportation  
Article (Tran.)

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. A person may not operate a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> unless they and any passenger < 16 years old are secured in a seat belt (or child safety seat). Tran. §22-412.3(b)
- II. A person ≥ 16 years old may not be a passenger in an "outboard front seat" of a motor vehicle unless they are restrained in a seat belt. An "outboard front seat" means a front seat position that is adjacent to a door of a motor vehicle. Tran. §22-412.3(a)(3) & (c)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Misdemeanor: A fine of not more than \$25 (including court costs). Tran. §§27-101(a) & 27-106(b) Note: A violation of this requirement is not considered a moving violation for licensing sanction purposes. Tran. §22-412.3(g)

Effect on Civil Liability:

The failure to use a seat belt may not be considered (1) as evidence of negligence, (2) as evidence of contributory, (2) to limit liability of a party or insurer or (4) to diminish recovery for damages arising out of the ownership, maintenance or operation of a motorcycle. Tran. §22-412.3(h)(1)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>3</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. A person transporting a child < 4 years old (regardless of the child's weight) or ≤ 40 lbs. (regardless of the child's age) in motor vehicle<sup>4</sup> shall secure such child in a child safety seat. Tran. §22-412.2(d)(1) & (2)
  - II. A person transporting a child weighing > 40 lbs. and < 16 years old in a motor vehicle<sup>4</sup> shall secure such child in a child safety seat (or a seat belt). Tran. §22-412.2(e)(1) & (2)
- Note: A child safety seat or seat belt may not be used to restrain, seat or position more than one individual at a time. Tran. §22-412.2(g)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The seat requirement does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons who cannot use a seat belt for physical or medical reasons; and, (2) to U.S. Postal Service carriers or contractors while delivering mail to local box routes. Tran. §22-412.3(d), (e) & (f)

<sup>2</sup>The term "motor vehicle" means either a Class A (passenger) vehicle, a Class E (truck) vehicle, Class F (tractor) vehicle, Class M (multipurpose) vehicle or Class P (passenger bus) which are required to be equipped with seat belts under Federal law. However, the term does not include a Class L (historic) vehicle. Tran. §22-412.3(a)(2)

<sup>3</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirements to use either a child safety seat or seat belt do not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To children whose weight, physical unfitness or medical condition prevent the practical use of this device; and, (2) to children where the number of children riding in the vehicle exceeds the number of available seat belts in the vehicle. Tran. §22-412.2(f) & (h)

<sup>4</sup>The term "motor vehicle" means either a Class A (passenger) vehicle, Class E (truck) vehicle with a capacity ≤ 3/4 ton and a gross vehicle weight ≤ 7,000 lbs. or a Class M (multipurpose) vehicle. Tran. §22-412.2(c)

**MARYLAND**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:

(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Misdemeanor: A fine of **\$25**. Tran. §§22-412.2(l)(1) & 27-101(a)  
Note: A violation of this requirement is not considered a moving violation for licensing sanction purposes. Tran. §22-412.2(j)

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of this requirement is not contributory negligence and may not be admitted as evidence in the trial of any civil action. Tran. §22-412.2(i)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

A person shall not operate or ride on a motorcycle unless they are wearing State approved protective headgear.<sup>5</sup> Tran. §21-1306(b) Note: This requirement does not apply to persons riding in an enclosed cab. Tran. §21-1306(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: A fine of not more than **\$500**. Tran. §27-101(a) & (b)  
Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

A person shall not operate or ride on a motorcycle unless they are wearing State approved eye-protection device or using a windscreen. Tran. §21-1306(c) Note: This requirement does not apply to persons riding in an enclosed cab. Tran. §21-1306(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: A fine of not more than **\$500**. Tran. §27-101(a) & (b)  
Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

A person < 16 years old may not ride or be a passenger on a bicycle on a highway unless they wear a nationally approved helmet.<sup>6</sup> Tran. §21-1207.1(a)(ii) & (c)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

A person, violating this requirement, is issued a warning that informs them of the requirements and provides educational materials about bicycle helmet use. Tran. §21-1207.1(d)

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<sup>5</sup>The failure to use protective headgear may not be considered (1) as evidence of negligence, (2) as evidence of contributory, (2) to limit liability of a party or insurer or (4) to diminish recovery for damages arising out of the ownership, maintenance or operation of a motorcycle. Tran. §21-1306(e)(1)

<sup>6</sup>This requirement does not apply (1) to passengers riding in commercial bicycle rickshaws or (2) to persons riding bicycles on certain segments of the boardwalk in Ocean City, Maryland. Tran. §21-1207.1(a)(2) & (b)

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements: **None**

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements: A person may not operate a Class E vehicle<sup>7</sup> while a passenger < 16 years old is riding in the unenclosed bed of the vehicle. Tran. §21-1121(c)

Sanctions for a Violation: Misdemeanor: A fine of not more than \$500. Tran. §27-101(a) & (b)  
Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Exemptions: This prohibition does not apply if (1) the vehicle is traveling ≤ 25 MPH, (2) an employee is being transported to a work site or (2) an individual is engaged in farming operations. Tran. §21-1121(b)(1) Note: These exemptions do not eliminate the requirements to use child safety seat or safety belts. Tran. §21-1121(b)(2)

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<sup>7</sup>A Class E vehicle is a truck with a capacity of  $\frac{3}{4}$  ton or less and a gross vehicle weight of ≤ 7,000 lbs. Tran. §§13-917 & 21-1121(a)



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

MASSACHUSETTS  
Massachusetts General Laws Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

No person shall operate or ride in a private passenger motor vehicle, vanpool vehicle or truck weighing < 18,000 lbs. unless they are secured in a safety belt.<sup>2</sup> Ch. 90, §13A (¶1) Note: For No children > 5 but ≤ 12 years old, see Required Use of Child Restraint Systems below. **Secondary Enforcement.** A law enforcement officer can only enforce this provision when a vehicle operator has been stopped for a violation of other provisions of law. Ch. 90, §13A (¶2)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Misdemeanor: A fine of \$25.<sup>3</sup> Ch. 90, §13A (¶2) and Ch. 274, §1 Note: A violation of this requirement shall not be considered as a conviction of a moving violation of the motor vehicle laws for the purpose of determining surcharges on motor vehicle premiums. Ch. 90, §13A

Effect on Civil Liability:

There are no statutory provisions.<sup>4</sup>

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>5</sup>:

Requirements:

I. No child ≤ 5 years old shall ride in a motor vehicle unless the child either is wearing a safety belt or is fastened in a child passenger restraint. Ch. 90, §7AA

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons riding in motor vehicles manufactured before July 1, 1966; (2) to any person who is physically unable to use a safety belt; (3) to rural carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while performing official duties; and, (4) to anyone involved in the operation of taxis, liveries, tractors, trucks with a gross weight ≥ 18,000 lbs., or buses; and, (5) passengers of authorized emergency vehicles. Ch. 90, §13A

<sup>2</sup>No person shall transport more than 14 school pupils in a motor vehicle unless all of the vehicle's occupants are secured in a safety belt. Ch. 90, §7D In addition, under separate provisions, a person operating a school bus is required to wear a safety belt while transporting children school pupils. Ch. 90, §7B A violation of these requirements is a misdemeanor for which the following sanctions may be imposed: For a 1st offense, a fine of not more than \$35; for a 2nd offense (within 12 months), a fine of not less than \$35 nor more than \$75; and, for a subsequent offense (within 12 months), a fine of not less than \$75 nor more than \$150. Ch.90, §20 & Ch. 274, §1

<sup>3</sup>Vehicle operators and passengers ≥ 16 years old in violation of this requirement are subject to a fine of \$25. However, if the offender is a passenger ≥ 12 but < 16 years old, the vehicle operator is subject to an additional fine of \$25 for each such passenger who was not wearing a safety belt. Ch. 90, §13A (¶2)

<sup>4</sup>The State supreme court has not addressed the issues of whether the nonuse of a safety belt either (1) can be used to mitigate damages or (2) can be considered as contributory negligence. The court refused to consider the such issues in one case because no evidence was presented to show that safety belt nonuse resulted in injuries. *Shahzade v. C.J. Mabardy, Inc.*, 586 N.E.2d 3 (Mass. 1992)

<sup>5</sup>**Exemptions.** This requirement does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To a child where all of the available seating positions with safety belts are occupied; (2) to a child who is riding in vehicle for hire; (3) to a child who is riding in a motor vehicle that is not equipped with safety belts; and, (4) to a child who for physical reason cannot use either a safety belt or child passenger restraint. Ch. 90, §7AA

MASSACHUSETTS

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Requirements: (continued)

II. No child > 5 but ≤ 12 years old shall ride in a motor vehicle unless the child is wearing a safety belt. Ch. 90, §7AA

Sanctions for Failure to Require the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Misdemeanor: The vehicle operator is subject to a fine of not more than \$25. Ch. 90, §7AA and Ch. 274, §1

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of this requirement shall not be used as evidence of contributory negligence in any civil action. Ch. 90, §7AA

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear<sup>6</sup>:

Requirements:

Every person operating or riding on a motorcycle or riding in a motorcycle sidecar shall wear State approved protective head gear. Ch. 90, §7

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: 1st offense-A fine of not more than \$35 2nd offense (within 12 months)-A fine of not less than \$35 nor more than \$75 Subsequent offense (within 12 months)-A fine of not less than \$75 nor more than \$150 Ch.90, §20 & Ch. 274, §1

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

If a motorcycle is not equipped with a windshield or screen, the operator of such vehicle shall wear eye glasses, goggles or a protective face shield. Ch. 90, §7

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: 1st offense-A fine of not more than \$35 2nd offense (within 12 months)-A fine of not less than \$35 nor more than \$75 Subsequent offense (within 12 months)-A fine of not less than \$75 nor more than \$150 Ch.90, §20 & Ch. 274, §1

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

When operating or riding a bicycle, a person ≤ 12 years old shall wear a nationally approved helmet.<sup>7</sup> This requirement does not apply if the person is in an enclosed trailer or other device which holds the person in place. Ch. 85, §11B

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Civil Disposition: A fine of not more than \$20.<sup>8</sup> Ch. 40, §21, cl. 16B

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<sup>6</sup>Motorized Bicycles. A person, who is either operating or riding on a motorized bicycle, must wear appropriate protective headgear. A person who is convicted of violating this requirement is subject to the following sanctions: For a 1st offense, a fine of not less than \$25; for a 2nd offense, a fine of not less than \$25 nor more than \$50 and, for a subsequent offense, a fine of not less than \$50 nor more than \$100. Ch. 90, §1B (¶ 2 & 3)

<sup>7</sup>A violation of this requirement shall not be used as evidence of contributory negligence in any civil action. Ch. 85, §11B

<sup>8</sup>A bicycle may be impounded for not more than 15 days. Ch. 85, §11B

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements: None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements: No person shall operate a pick-up truck for a distance of > 5 miles and > 5 MPH with persons < 12 years old in the body of such truck. Ch. 90, §13

Sanctions for a Violation: Misdemeanor: 1st offense-A fine of not more than \$35 2nd offense (within 12 months)-A fine of not less than \$35 nor more than \$75 Subsequent offense (within 12 months)-A fine of not less than \$75 nor more than \$150 Ch.90, §20 & Ch. 274, §1

Exemptions: This requirement does not apply (1) to pick-up trucks used in an official parade, (2) where such truck as affixed to it a legal "Owner Repair" or "Farm" license or (3) to a pick-up truck engaged in farming activities. Ch. 90, §13



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

MICHIGAN  
Michigan Compiled Laws Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. When a motor vehicle<sup>1</sup> is in operation, each driver and front seat passenger shall wear a safety belt. §257.710e(3)
- II. When operating a motor vehicle<sup>1</sup>, a driver shall secure each child ≥4 but <16 years in a safety belt.<sup>2</sup> §257.710e(4) See Child Safety Restraint Systems below.  
**Secondary Enforcement.** A law enforcement officer can only enforce the above two requirements as a secondary action after a driver has been detained for another violation of the vehicle code. §257.710e(5)
- III. A person operating an autocytle on a highway shall wear a seat belt. §257.658(5)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Civil Infraction<sup>3</sup>: A fine (including court costs) of \$25. §§257.6a, 257.710e(7) & 257.907(2) Note: Points shall not be assessed against an offender's driver record for a violation of either I or II above. §257.710e(8)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to wear a safety belt in violation of the requirements in I or II above may be considered evidence of negligence and may reduce the recovery for damages by not more than 5%. §257.710e(6)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. When transporting a child <1 year old in a motor vehicle<sup>4</sup>, a driver

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons riding (a) in vehicles manufactured before January 1, 1965, (b) a bus, (c) a motorcycle or (d) a moped; (2) to persons who for physical or medical reason cannot use a safety belt; (3) To persons riding in motor vehicles that are not required to have safety belts; (4) To persons riding in commercial or U.S. Postal Service vehicles that make frequent stops to pickup or deliver goods or services; (5) to rural carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while performing official duties; and, (6) to passengers on a school bus. §257.710e(1) Note: The exemption provided for U.S. Postal Service vehicles also includes vehicles owned and used by Postal Service employees while on official business. 1985-1986 Op. Atty. Gen. Mich. 287

<sup>2</sup>A driver does not have to comply with this requirement if the number of children to be secured exceeds the number of safety belts available. Unsecured children have to be seated in other than the front seat and all front seat passengers must be secured. In the case of pickup trucks where all safety belts are being used and where such vehicles do not have an extended cab or jump seats, unsecured children may be transported in the front seat without a safety belt. §257.710e(4)

<sup>3</sup>A violation of the requirement to wear a seat belt when operating an autocytle on a highway appears to be a misdemeanor. The sanctions for this misdemeanor are an imprisonment term of not more than 90 days and/or a fine of not more than \$100. §§257.658(5) & 257.901

<sup>4</sup>**Exemptions.** These requirements do not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To children being nursed; (2) to children being transported in a bus, school bus, taxicab, moped, motorcycle or a vehicle that is not required to be equipped with safety belts; and, (3) to children who are exempt due to physical or medical reasons. §257.710d(2), (3) & (6)

MICHIGAN

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Requirements: (continued)

shall secure such child in a Federally approved child restraint system.<sup>5</sup> §257.710d(1)(a)

II. When transporting a child  $\geq 1$  but  $< 4$  years old in the front seat of a motor vehicle<sup>4</sup>, a driver shall secure such child in a Federally approved child restraint system.<sup>5</sup> §257.710d(1)(b)

III. When transporting a child  $\geq 1$  but  $< 4$  years old in the rear seat of a motor vehicle<sup>4</sup>, a driver shall secure such child in either a Federally approved child restraint system or a safety belt.<sup>5</sup> §257.710d(1)(c)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Civil Infraction: A fine of not more than \$10. §§257.6a, 257.710d(4) & 257.907(2) However, an offender is also liable for \$5 in court costs. §257.710d(13) Note: Points shall not be assessed against an offender's driver record. §257.710d(5)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

I. A person operating or riding on a motorcycle shall wear a State approved crash helmet. §257.658(4)

II. A person  $< 19$  years operating a moped on a public highway shall wear a State approved crash helmet. §257.658(4)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: A violation of the requirement to wear a crash helmet appears to be a misdemeanor. The sanctions for this misdemeanor are an imprisonment term of not more than 90 days and/or a fine of not more than \$100. §§257.658(4) & 257.901 Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of these requirements.

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

A person, who is operating a motorcycle without a windshield and is traveling  $> 35$  MPH, must wear either goggles, a transparent face shield or eyeglasses. §257.708a

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: A violation of the requirement to use an eye protection device appears to be a misdemeanor. The sanctions for this misdemeanor are an imprisonment term of not more than 90 days and/or a fine of not more than \$100. §§257.708a & 257.901 Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

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<sup>5</sup>A Federal district court has held that Michigan's Child Passenger Protection Law is only enforceable via a secondary action. The court felt that the provisions providing for child passenger protection (§257.710d) where "incorporated by reference" into the passenger protection law (§257.710e). As a result, the secondary enforcement provisions of the passenger protection law apply also to the enforcement of the provisions concerned with child passenger protection. *Walton v. City of Southfield*, 748 F.Supp. 1214 (E.D. Mich. 1990)

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements: None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements: None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

Note: The law appears to prohibit persons <16 years of age from riding in the bed of a pickup truck. §257.710e(4) Such individuals must be secured as noted above.<sup>2</sup>

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

MINNESOTA  
Minnesota Statutes Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

I. The driver of a passenger or commercial motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> shall wear a seat belt.<sup>3</sup> §169.686, subd. 1(1)  
II. A passenger riding the front seat of a passenger or commercial motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> shall wear a seat belt. §169.686, subd. 1(2)  
III. A passenger, who is >3 but <11 years old, shall be secured in a seat belt while riding in any seating position. §169.686, subd. 1(3)  
**Secondary Enforcement.** A law enforcement officer may not issue a citation for a violation of these requirements unless they have lawfully stopped or detained the vehicle operator for a moving violation except for an equipment violation. §169.686, subd. 1  
Note: Not reported are certain required uses of seat belts which are needed to secure wheelchairs being transported on public transportation vehicles. §299A.13

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Petty Misdemeanor<sup>3</sup>: A fine of \$25.<sup>4</sup> §§169.89, subd. 1 & 169.686, subd. 1 A person may also be required to attend a driver improvement clinic. §169.89, subd. 5 Note: A violation of this requirement shall not be recorded on an offender's driver record. §169.686, subd. 1.

Effect on Civil Liability:

Evidence of the failure to use a seat belt shall not be admissible in evidence in any litigation involving personal injuries or property damage resulting from the use or operation of any motor vehicle. §169.685, subd. 4

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a seat belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To drivers who are operating a passenger vehicle in reverse; (2) to persons who are riding in a vehicle where all of the available seat belt positions have been occupied; (3) to persons who for physical or medical reasons cannot use a seat belt; (4) to persons who are engaged in work that requires them to alight from and reenter a passenger vehicle at frequent intervals and where the vehicle does not exceed 25 MPH; (5) to rural mail carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while performing official duties; (6) to persons driving or riding in a passenger motor vehicle manufactured before January 1, 1965; and, (6) to persons riding in pickup trucks while engaged in normal farming work or activity. §169.686, subd. 2

<sup>2</sup>Under State law, the following types of motor vehicles do not have to be equipped with safety belts: (1) Bus, (2) school bus, (3) motorcycle, (4) motorized bicycle, (5) farm tractor, (6) road tractor and (7) truck. §169.685, subd. 1

<sup>3</sup>Under separate provisions of law, school bus and Head Start bus operators must use a safety belt. §169.447, subd. 2 Persons, violating this requirement, commit a Petty Misdemeanor and are subject to a fine sanction of not more than \$200. However, if they commit a third offense within 12 months, they commit a Misdemeanor and are subject to an incarceration term of not more than 90 days and/or a fine of not more than \$700. §§169.89, subs. 1 & 2 and 609.03(3) Note: These are the general penalty provisions of Chapter 169.

<sup>4</sup>An individual ≥ 15 years old who violates I or II is personally responsible for their actions. However, the driver is responsible if the offense was committed either by their child < 15 years old or by any child < 11 years old. §169.686, subd. 1

MINNESOTA

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>5</sup>:

- Requirements: A driver, when transporting a child <4 years old in a motor vehicle that is equipped with factory-installed seat belts, shall secure such child in a Federally approved child passenger restraint system. §169.685, subd. 5(a) & (b)
- Sanctions for Failure to Require the Use of Child Restraint Systems: Petty Misdemeanor: A fine of not more than \$50. §169.685, subd. 5(b) A person may also be required to attend a driver improvement clinic. §169.89, subd. 5
- Effect on Civil Liability: Evidence of the failure to use a child passenger restraint system shall not be admissible in evidence in any litigation involving personal injuries or property damage resulting from the use or operation of any motor vehicle. §169.685, subd. 4

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear<sup>6</sup>:

- Requirements: I. No person < 18 years old shall operate or ride on a motorcycle<sup>7</sup> or motorized bicycle without wearing State approved protective headgear.<sup>8</sup> §§169.223, subd. 1 & 169.974, subd. 4(a)  
II. Any person who is operating a motorcycle on a "two-wheeled instruction permit" must wear State approved protective headgear. §169.974, subd. 2
- Sanctions for Failure to Use: Petty Misdemeanor: A fine of not more than \$200. §169.89, subs. 1 & 2 A person may also be required to attend a driver improvement clinic. §169.89, subd. 5

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<sup>5</sup>Exemptions. The requirement to use a child passenger restraint system does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To children who are being transported for official purposes in an emergency medical vehicle where the use of such a system is unreasonable or unavailable; (2) to children who are being transported in police vehicles when a such a system is not available but such children must be restrained in a seat belt; (3) to children who cannot use such a system for physical or medical reasons; and, (4) to children riding in a motor vehicle for hire (e.g, taxi, airport limousine and bus) but this exemption does not apply to rented, leased or borrowed motor vehicles. §169.685, subd. 6

<sup>6</sup>In an action to recover damages for injuries from a traffic accident, the failure to use protective headgear shall be admissible only with respect to the question of head injuries. Damages for head injuries of any person who was not wearing protective headgear shall be reduced to the extent that those injuries could have been avoided by wearing protective headgear. The admissibility of such evidence applies to operators or passengers regardless of whether they are required by law to wear protective headgear. §169.974, subd. 6 Note: Because of §169.223, subd. 1, such evidence may also be allowed in the case of injured operators or riders of motorized bicycles.

<sup>7</sup>A person < 18 years old shall wear protective headgear when operating off-highway motorcycles. §84.793, subd. 2 A person, who violates this requirement commits a misdemeanor. §84.796(a) The sanctions for a misdemeanor are an imprisonment term of not more than 90 days and/or a fine of not more than \$700. §609.03(3)

<sup>8</sup>This requirement does not apply if the operator or rider is participating in an authorized parade or to persons riding in an enclosed cab. §169.974, subd. 4(b)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

No person shall operate a motorcycle<sup>9</sup> or motorized bicycle without wearing an eye-protection device.<sup>10</sup> §§169.223, subd. 1 & 169.974, subd. 4(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Petty Misdemeanor: A fine of not more than \$200. §169.89, subs. 1 & 2 A person may also be required to attend a driver improvement clinic. §169.89, subd. 5

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

The operator of an electric-assisted bicycle must wear nationally approved headgear. §169.223, subd. 1(5)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Petty Misdemeanor: A fine of not more than \$200. §169.89, subs. 1 & 2 A person may also be required to attend a driver improvement clinic. §169.89, subd. 5

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None<sup>9</sup>

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

Note: The law appears to indirectly prohibit a person from riding in the bed of a pickup truck. A person riding in these vehicles must use a safety belt or child passenger restraint system unless the vehicle is being used in farming work or activity. §169.686, subs. 1 & 2(7)

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:

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<sup>9</sup>Any person operation an off-highway motorcycle must wear an eye-protection device. §84.793, subd. 4 A person, who violates this requirement commits a misdemeanor. §84.796(a) The sanctions for a misdemeanor are an imprisonment term of not more than 90 days and/or a fine of not more than \$700. §609.03(3)

<sup>10</sup>This requirement does not apply to operators of electric-assisted bicycles. §169.223, subd. 1(6)



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

MISSISSIPPI  
Mississippi Code Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

When a passenger motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> is in forward motion, the driver and every front seat passenger shall wear a seat belt. §63-2-1(1)  
**Secondary Enforcement.** No fine shall be imposed against an operator unless they have been charged with and convicted of some other of violation of the law. §63-2-7(1)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Misdemeanor: A fine of \$25. No additional assessments provided for under law shall be imposed against a violator Note: A violation of this requirement is not to be entered on an offender's driving record. §§63-2-3 & 63-2-7

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to use a seat belt shall not be considered contributory or comparative negligence. §63-2-3

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:

Requirements:

A driver, when transporting a child < 4 years old in a private passenger motor vehicle<sup>2</sup>, shall secure such child in a Federally approved child passenger restraint device or system. §63-7-301

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Misdemeanor: A fine of not more than \$25. §§63-7-309 & 63-9-11(1)  
In addition, the offender is required to pay a State assessment \$23. §99-19-73(1)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to comply with this requirement shall not be considered contributory or comparative negligence. §63-7-301

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

No person shall operate or ride on a motorcycle or motor scooter unless they are wearing a crash helmet that has been approved by the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators. §63-7-64

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: 1st offense-Imprisonment for not more than 10 days and/or a fine of not more than \$100 2nd offense (within 1 year)-Imprisonment for not more than 20 days and/or a fine of not more than \$200 3rd and subsequent offense (within 1 year)-Imprisonment for not more than 6 months days and/or a fine of not more than \$500 §§63-7-64 & 63-9-11 All offenders are subject to a State assessment of \$23. §99-19-73(1)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to wear a seat belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons operating farm vehicles, implements of husbandry or farm tractors; (2) to persons who because of medical reasons cannot use a seat belt; and (3) to rural letter carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while on official duty. §63-2-1(3)

<sup>2</sup>A "passenger motor vehicle" means a motor vehicle that is designed to carry ≤ 10 persons but does not include motorcycles, mopeds, all-terrain vehicles or trailers. §63-2-1(2)

**MISSISSIPPI**

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

Note: This requirement is indirectly covered by the requirement to use a crash helmet.

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

**None**

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

**None**

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

**None**

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

MISSOURI  
Vernon's Annotated Missouri Statutes

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

I. When a passenger car<sup>2</sup> is in operation, (1) every driver, (2) front seat passenger and (3) person < 18 years old while operating or riding in a truck<sup>3</sup> shall wear a safety belt. §307.178.2

II. When a passenger car<sup>2</sup> is in operation, every driver shall secure a child ≥4 but < 16 years old in a safety belt. §307.178.3

**Secondary Enforcement.** No person shall be stopped, inspected or detained solely to determine compliance with these requirements. §307.178.2

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Infraction: A fine of not more than **\$10**. No court costs can be imposed and no points can be entered on an offender's driving record. §307.178.5

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to wear a safety belt is not to be considered as evidence of comparative negligence. However, such evidence may be admitted for the purpose of mitigation of damages if the party seeking to introduce such evidence presents expert evidence proving that such a failure contributed to the plaintiff's injuries. If such is proven, damages may be reduced by not more than 1%. §307.178.4

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

Every person, who transports a child < 4 years old in a motor vehicle<sup>5</sup>, shall secure such child in a child passenger restraint system approved by the State. §210.104.1

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Infraction: Not more than **\$25** plus court costs. §210.104.2 Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons employed by the U.S. Postal Service while on official duties; (2) to persons riding in passenger cars manufactured before January 1, 1968; (3) to persons who for medical reasons cannot use a safety belt; and, (4) to persons "while operating or riding a motor vehicle being used in agricultural work-related activities." §307.178.2 In addition, a vehicle operator or passenger is not in violation of the safety belt use requirement if they are unable to use a safety belt due to the fact that all of the available safety belts are already in use. §307.178.7

<sup>2</sup>A "passenger car" means every motor vehicle designed for carrying ≤10 persons but does not include motorcycles, motorized bicycles, motor tricycles or trucks with a gross weight of ≥12,000 lbs. §307.178.1

<sup>3</sup>A "truck" is defined as "a motor vehicle designed, used, or maintained for the transportation of property." §301.010(58)

<sup>4</sup>**Exemptions.** This requirement does not apply to a public carrier for hire. §210.104.3

<sup>5</sup>Note: The term "motor vehicle" is not defined in Chapter 210 of Title XII.

MISSOURI

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Effect on Civil Liability:

The failure to comply with this requirement shall not be the basis for a claim of civil liability or negligence or contributory negligence of any person for damages. In addition, such failure shall not be admissible as evidence in the trial of any civil action. §210.106

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

Every rider or passenger of a motorcycle or motortricycle shall wear State approved protective headgear. §302.020.2

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Infraction: A fine of not more than \$25. No court costs can be imposed and no points can be entered on an offender's driving record. §302.020.3 Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

Note: This requirement is indirectly covered by the above requirement to use protective headgear.

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

I. No person shall operate a truck<sup>3</sup> with a gross weight of <12,000 lbs. when any person <18 year old is riding in the truck's unenclosed bed. §304.665.1  
II. No person <18 years old shall ride in the unenclosed bed of a truck<sup>3</sup> with a gross weight of <12,000 lbs. when such vehicle is in operation. §304.665.1

Sanctions for a Violation:

Class C Misdemeanor: A truck operator, who violates the requirement

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle: (continued)

Sanctions for a Violation: (continued)

in I above, is guilty of a Class C Misdemeanor.<sup>6</sup> §304.665.1 The sanctions for this misdemeanor are an imprisonment sentence of not more than 15 days and/or a fine of not more than \$300. §§558.011.1(7) & 560.016.1(3)

Exemptions:

The above requirements do not apply in the following circumstances: (1) A person must ride in an unenclosed area in order to discharge employment duties; (2) a person must ride in an unenclosed area in order to engaged in agricultural activities; (3) a person is riding in an unenclosed area while participating in a lawfully authorized parade, caravan or exhibition; (4) a person may ride in the unenclosed area provided the vehicle has a device that prevents such passenger from being thrown, falling or jumping out of the vehicle; (5) a person is riding the unenclosed area as part of a "special event" associated with a social activity of limited duration and there is a lack of available seating in the enclosed area of the vehicle; (6) a person is riding in the unenclosed area for the purpose of providing assistance to or ensuring the safety of other persons that are engaged in a recreational activity; or (7) a person is riding in the unenclosed area of a family owned truck which is the only vehicle owned by the family and there is insufficient room in the passenger compartment to accommodate all of the passengers. §304.665.2

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<sup>6</sup>Section §304.665 does not provide for a specific sanction for a violation of its provisions by a person < 18 years old who is riding in the unenclosed bed of a truck. As a result, the generally penalty provision Chapter 304 may apply. The general penalty provision provides for an imprisonment term of not more than 1 year and/or a fine of not less than \$5 but not more than \$500. §304.570



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

MONTANA  
Montana Code Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

A motor vehicle cannot be operated unless the driver and every passenger is wearing a seatbelt.<sup>2</sup> §61-13-103(1)

**Secondary Enforcement.** A driver may not be stopped for a violation of this requirement except upon reasonable cause to believe that such driver has violated another traffic regulation or that the driver's vehicle is unsafe or not equipped as required by law. §61-13-103(4)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

A mandatory fine of \$20. A violation of this requirement is not considered a moving violation of the purposes of suspending a driver's license. §61-13-104(1) & (2) In addition, no insurance company shall increase a person's premium based on a violation of this requirement. §61-13-104(2)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to comply with this requirement shall not be admissible as evidence in any civil action for personal injury or property damage. Furthermore, such failure does not constitute negligence. §61-13-106

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>3</sup>:

Requirements:

I. A person, who transports their child <2 years old in a motor vehicle<sup>4</sup>, shall secure such child in a Federally approved child restraint system. §61-9-420(1) & (3)

II. A person, who transports their child between 2 and 4 years old or who weighs <40 lbs. in a motor vehicle, shall secure such child in either a Federally approved child restraint system or a safety belt. §61-9-420(2) & (3)

Note: A person is not required to have more than 3 child safety restraints systems in a vehicle. §61-9-420(4)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a seat belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons who for medical reasons cannot use a seat belt; (2) to persons who cannot use a seat belt because all of the available seat belts are in use; (3) to operators of motorcycles or motor-driven cycles; (4) to occupants of specially licensed motor vehicles (e.g., road construction equipment, maintenance machinery, ditch-digging apparatus, well-boring apparatus and motor vehicles or trailers designed to apply fertilizer); and, (5) to persons who make frequent stops as part of their official job duties. §§61-1-104 & 61-13-103(2)

<sup>2</sup>Under the safety belt law, the term "motor vehicle" is defined as a vehicle propelled by its own power and designed primarily to transport persons or property upon the highway (§61-13-102(3)) and the term "seatbelt" means an occupant restraint system that complies with Federal law (§61-13-102(5)). However, under Federal law such a system is only applicable on certain types motor vehicles.

<sup>3</sup>**Exemptions.** These requirements do not apply children who for physical or medical reasons cannot use a child restraint system or seat belt. §61-9-420(5)

<sup>4</sup>The term "motor vehicle" does not include motorbus, school bus, taxicab, moped, quadricycle, motorcycle, any vehicle that does not have to have a safety belt under Federal law or a vehicle designed for 2 persons but where there are two addition persons <4 years old in the vehicle. §61-9-421

**MONTANA**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Penalty: A fine of not more than **\$100**. §61-9-423 Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of these requirements.

Effect on Civil Liability:

Even though evidence of a failure to comply with this requirement is admissible in any civil action for personal injury or damages, such failure alone does not constitute negligence. §61-9-422

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

I. A person < 18 years old, who operates or rides on a motorcycle or quadricycle<sup>5</sup>, shall wear State approved protective headgear. §61-9-417(1)

II. A person may not operate a motorcycle unless all passenger < 18 years old are wearing protective headgear. §61-9-417(2)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

A fine of **\$5**. §61-9-518(1) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:

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<sup>5</sup>A "quadricycle" is defined as "a four-wheeled motor vehicle, designed for on-road or off-road use, having a seat or saddle upon which the operator sits and a motor capable of producing not more than 50 horsepower." §61-1-133

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

NEBRASKA  
Revised Statutes of Nebraska

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

A person shall not operate a motor vehicle<sup>1</sup> unless they and each front seat passenger are wearing an occupant protection system (safety belt).<sup>2</sup> §§60-6,265 & 60-6,270(1)

**Secondary Enforcement.** Enforcement of this requirement by law enforcement officers shall be accomplished only as a secondary action when a driver has been cited or charged with a violation of some other offense. §60-6,271

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Traffic Infraction: A fine of \$25.<sup>3</sup> However, no court costs can be assessed and no points can be assessed against a person's driving record. §§60-4,182(13) & 60-6,272

Effect on Civil Liability:

Evidence of a violation of the requirement shall not be admissible in regard to the issue of liability or proximate cause but may be admissible as evidence concerning mitigation of damages. However, such evidence shall not reduce recovery for damages by more than 5%. §60,6,273

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. Resident drivers of Nebraska, who are transporting a child either <4 years old or <40 lbs. in any motor vehicle<sup>3</sup>, must secure such child in Federally approved child passenger restraint system. §60-6,267(1)(a)
- II. Resident drivers of Nebraska, who are transporting a child either ≥4 but <5 years old or ≥40 lbs. in any motor vehicle, must secure such child in an occupant protection system (safety belt). §§60-6,265 & 60-6,267(1)(b)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Infraction: A fine of \$25. Note: The law is not clear but it is possible that a person could have 1 point assessed against their driving record. §60-4,182(13)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** I. This requirement does not apply to vehicles manufactured before the 1973 model year, farm tractors, implements of husbandry, motorcycles, motor-driven cycles, mopeds or buses. §§60-6,266 & 60-6,270(3) II. This requirement does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons who because of medical reasons cannot wear an occupant protection system; (2) to rural carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while performing official duties; and, (3) to members of an ambulance or rescue service unit while involved in patient care. §60-6,270(2)

<sup>2</sup>Under separate provisions of the law, a school bus operator is required to wear a safety belt if such bus is equipped with seat belts. §79-609(3) Note: This section does not provide a penalty for a violation of this requirement.

<sup>3</sup>Regardless of the number of violations occurring at one time, a driver can only be cited for one offense. §60-6,272

<sup>4</sup>**Exemptions.** I. This requirement does not apply to persons who are operating taxicabs, mopeds, motorcycles or motor vehicles manufactured as a 1963 or earlier model year. §60-6,267(1) II. This requirement does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To children who cannot use a child passenger restraint system for physical or medical reasons; and, (2) to children who are being transported in emergency vehicles when the vehicle operator is performing official duties. §60-6,267(2)

**NEBRASKA**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of this requirement shall not constitute *prima facie* evidence of negligence nor shall such a violation constitute a defense to any claim for personal injuries to a child or recovery of medical expenses for injuries. In addition, such a violation shall not constitute a defense for another person to any claim for personal injuries to a child or recovery of medical expenses for injuries. §60-6,269

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

A person shall not operate or ride on a motorcycle or moped unless they are wearing a Federally approved protective helmet. §§60-6,279, 60-6,280 & 60-6,281

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Traffic Infraction: A fine of \$50. §60-6,282 No points are assessed against a person's driving record. §60-4,182(13)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

Note: This requirement is indirectly satisfied via the requirement to use a protective helmet.

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

NEVADA  
Nevada Revised Statutes and Nevada Administrative Code (NAC)

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

A person driving and any front or back seat passenger >5 years old riding in a motor vehicle (with an unladen weight of <6,000 lbs.) shall wear a safety belt. §484.641(2)

**Secondary Enforcement.** A citation may be issued for a violation of this requirement only if the violation is discovered when the vehicle is halted or its driver arrested for another alleged violation or offense. §484.641(3)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

A fine of not more than \$25.<sup>2</sup> §484.641(3) Note: A violation of this requirement is not a moving violation for license sanctioning purposes. §484.641(4)(A)

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of this requirement may not be considered as negligence or as causation in any civil action or as negligence or reckless driving. §484.641(4)(b) In addition, such a violation may not be considered as misuse of a product or as causation in any action brought to recover damages for injury to a person or property resulting from the manufacture, distribution, sale or use of a product. §484.641(4)(c)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>3</sup>:

Requirements:

A person transporting a child, who is <5 years old or who weighs <40 lbs. in a motor vehicle, shall secure such child in a Federally approved child restraint system. §484.474(1)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

A fine of not less than \$35 nor more than \$100. §484.474(2) Note: A violation of this requirement is not a moving violation for license sanctioning purposes. §484.474(3)

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of this requirement may not be considered (1) as negligence in any civil action or (2) as negligence or reckless driving. §484.474(4)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons who are unable to wear a safety belt for physical or medical reasons; (2) to persons driving or riding in motor vehicles that are not required to be equipped with safety belts under Federal law; (3) to employees of the U.S. Postal Service while delivering mail in the rural areas of the State; (4) to persons who frequently leave a vehicle for the purpose of delivering property and where the vehicle does not exceed 15 MPH; and, (5) to passengers riding in a public transportation vehicle including a taxi, school bus or emergency vehicle. §484.641(6) In addition, the State can exempt persons from this requirement who ride in motor vehicles or seating posting that the State has determined would make compliance impractical. §484.641(5)

<sup>2</sup>If the violator is child ≥5 but <18 years old, the driver is cited for the offense. However, if both the driver and such child are in violation of this requirement, only one citation may be issued. §484.641(3)

<sup>3</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a child restraint system does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To children being transported in a means of public transportation including a taxi, school bus or emergency vehicle; and, (2) to children who have either a physical or medical difficulty that would make use of such a system either impractical or dangerous. §484.474(5)(a) & (b)

NEVADA

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements: A person operating or riding on a motorcycle shall wear State approved protective headgear. This requirement does not apply to persons operating or riding on trimobles or mopeds §486.231(1) & (2)

Sanctions for Failure to Use: Misdemeanor: An imprisonment term of not more than **6 months** and/or a fine of not more than **\$1,000**.<sup>4</sup> §§193.150(1) & 486.381 Two (2) points are assessed against a person's driving record. NAC 483.510

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device<sup>5</sup>:

Requirements: A person operating or riding on a motorcycle or a trimobile shall wear State approved glasses, goggles or a face shield. This requirement does not apply to persons operating or riding on mopeds. §486.231(1) & (2)

Sanctions for Failure to Use: Misdemeanor: An imprisonment term of not more than **6 months** and/or a fine of not more than **\$1,000**.<sup>4</sup> §§193.150(1) & 486.381 Two (2) points are assessed against a person's driving record. NAC 483.510

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements: None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements: None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements: A person shall not ride on any portion of a vehicle that is not designed or intended for passenger use. §484.473

Sanctions for a Violation: Misdemeanor: An imprisonment term of not more than **6 months** and/or a fine of not more than **\$1,000**.<sup>4</sup> A 2nd offender may be required to attend a driver training school. §§193.150(1) & 484.251

Exemptions: An employee engaged in the discharging duties or a person riding within a truck body and space designed for merchandise. §484.473

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<sup>4</sup>As an alternative to either an imprisonment term or a fine, an offender may be sentenced to perform a fixed period of work for the benefit of the community. §193.150(2)

<sup>5</sup>This requirement does not apply to persons operating or riding (1) on either a motorcycle or a trimobile if such vehicle is equipped with a transparent windscreen; (2) in a motorcycle being driven in an authorized parade; or, (3) in a three-wheeled motorcycle where the driver or passengers are within an enclosed cab. §486.231(3), (4) & (5)

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

NEW HAMPSHIRE  
New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts:

Requirements:

I. When operating a motor vehicle, a person < 18 years old must wear a safety belt. §265:107-a, I-a  
II. No person shall transport a person ≥4 but < 18 years old in a motor vehicle unless such person is secured in a seat or safety belt. §265:107-a, I

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Violation: 1st offense-A fine of \$25 Subsequent offense-A fine of \$50 §§265:107-a, III Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of these requirements.

Effect on Civil Liability:

In *Thibeault v. Campbell*, 622 A.2d 212 (N.H. 1993), the State supreme court held that "a party's failure to use a seat belt is inadmissible to show negligence where the nonuse may have contributed to the party's injuries but was not a cause of the collision itself." 622 A.2d at 214

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

No person shall transport a person < 4 years old in a motor vehicle unless such child is secured in a Federally approved child passenger restraint. §265:107-a, I

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Violation: 1st offense-A fine of \$25 Subsequent offense-A fine of \$50 §§265:107-a, III Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of these requirements shall not be used as evidence of contributory negligence in any civil action. §265:107-a, VI

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

I. A person < 18 years, who operates or rides on a motorcycle must wear State approved protective headgear.<sup>2</sup> §265:122, I & II  
II. An operator cannot transport a passenger < 18 years old on a motorcycle unless such passenger is wearing protective headgear. §265:122, IV

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Violation: A fine of not more than \$1,000 §§251:2, IV(a); 265:2; and, 265:122, IV

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** These requirements do not apply in the following circumstances: To children who are being transported in (1) a vehicle used to transport passengers for hire, (2) a school bus weighing > 10,000 lbs, (3) a school bus weighing < 10,000 lbs. which was manufactured without safety belts, (4) a vehicle manufactured before 1968, (5) a motorcycle or (6) an antique motor car. §265:107-a, II

<sup>2</sup>This requirement may have been affected by changes to Federal highway safety funding criteria. §265:122, III

**NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:**

Requirements:

Unless a motorcycle is equipped with a windshield or screen which protects a driver's eyes, they shall wear either eyeglasses, goggles or a protective face shield when operating such a motor vehicle. §265:123

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Violation: A fine of not more than **\$1,000**. §§265:2; 625:9, V & 651:2, IV(a) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

**Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:**

Requirements:

**None**

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

**Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:**

Requirements:

**None**

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

**Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:**

Requirements:

**None**

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

NEW JERSEY  
New Jersey Statutes Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

I. When a passenger automobile<sup>1</sup> is being operated, the driver and each front seat passenger shall wear a safety seat belt. §39:3-76.2f(a)  
II. When a front seat passenger is  $\geq 5$  but  $< 18$  years, the driver shall secure such passenger in a safety seat belt. §39:3-76.2f(b)  
III. Each passenger, who is riding a school bus equipped with safety belts, shall wear such a belt when the vehicle is in operation. §39:3B-11  
**Secondary Enforcement.** Enforcement of requirements I & III by law enforcement officers shall be accomplished only as a secondary action when a driver has been detained for a suspected violation of the motor vehicle and traffic regulations. §39:3-76.2i

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

I. A violation of either I or II above: A fine of \$20. Note: Points are not assessed against a driver's record for a violation of these requirements. §39:3-76.2j  
II. A violation of III above: Imprisonment for not more than 30 days and/or a fine of not more than \$50. §39:3B-6

Effect on Civil Liability:

I. The failure to wear a safety belt is not considered contributory negligence to the extent that such non use would be a bar to recover damages in a traffic accident. However, such non use can be used to reduce damages provided in can be determined that the damages to be reduce could have been avoided by using a safety belt. *Waterson v. General Motors Corp.*, 544 A.2d 357 (N.J. 1988)  
Note: The law establishing these seat belt use requirements does not alter existing law with respect to the trial of a civil action for damages for personal injuries or death sustained in a motor vehicle accident. §39:3-76.2h  
II. **School Bus.** Statutory law specifically provides that a school bus owner or operator is not liable for the injuries sustained by a passenger who fails to either use or properly wear a safety belt when use of such belts is required. §39:3B-11

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:

Requirements:

A person, transporting a child  $< 5$  years old in a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup>, shall secure such child in a Federally approved child passenger restraint system. Notwithstanding this requirement, a child  $\geq 18$  months but  $< 5$

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a safety seat belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons operating or riding in a passenger automobile manufactured before July 1, 1966 or where such vehicle does not have to have safety seat belts under Federal law; (2) to persons who are unable to wear a safety seat belt for physical or medical reasons; and, (3) to rural letter carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while performing official duties. §39:3-76.2g Note: A "passenger automobile" is defined as any automobile "used and designed for the transportation of passengers, other than omnibuses and school buses." An "automobile" is defined as any motor vehicle except a motorcycle. And, a "motor vehicle" is defined as any vehicle "propelled otherwise than by muscular power, excepting such vehicles as run only upon rails or tracks and motorized bicycles." §39:1-1

<sup>2</sup>This requirement only applies to persons who are operating motor vehicles that are equipped with safety belts. §39:3-76.2a Note: See Footnote No. 1 for a definition of "motor vehicle."

**NEW JERSEY**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Requirements: (continued)

years may be secured in a safety belt in the rear seat. However, if the vehicle has no rear seats, the child must be secured in a child restraint system.<sup>3</sup> §39:3-76.2a

**School Bus.** A child, who is riding in a school bus equipped with safety belts, must be secured in a Federally approved child restraint system. §39:3B-11 Note: This statutory provision does not provide for either age or weight limitations related to child restraint usage.

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

A fine of not less than **\$10** nor more than **\$25**. §39:3-76.2d Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

**School Bus.** For a violation of the requirement to use a child restraint device on a school bus, a person is subject to an imprisonment term of not more than 30 days and/or a fine of not more than \$50. §39:3B-6

Effect on Civil Liability:

In no event shall the failure to wear a child passenger restraint system be considered as contributory negligence, nor shall the failure to wear such a system be admissible as evidence in the trail of any civil action. §39:3-76.2a

**School Bus.** Likewise, a school bus owner or operator is not liable for the injuries sustained by a child who was not using a child restrained device when such use is required by law. §39:3B-11

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

A person operating or riding on a motorcycle<sup>5</sup> must wear a State approved protective helmet. §39:3-76.7(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

A fine of not more than **\$25**. §39:3-79 Note: No points are assessed against a person's driving record for a violation of this requirement. §39:3-76.7(b)

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<sup>3</sup>If the number of children <5 years old exceeds the number of available safety belts, unrestrained children must ride in the rear seat of the vehicle. §39:3-76.2b

<sup>4</sup>Under separate provisions of law, a motorcycle operator is responsible for making sure that a motorcycle passenger wears a helmet while riding either in an astride position or in a sidecar. An operator, who fails to comply with this requirement, is subject to a fine of not less than **\$50** nor more than **\$100**. §39:3-76.5a

<sup>5</sup>The term "motorcycle" does not include any three-wheeled motor vehicle equipped with a single cab with glazing enclosing the occupant, seats similar to those of a passenger vehicle or truck, seat belts and automotive steering. §§39:3-76.7 & 39:3-76.8

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device<sup>6</sup>:

Requirements:	No person shall operate a motorcycle <sup>4</sup> unless they wear State approved goggles or a face shield. §39:3-76.8
Sanctions for Failure to Use:	A fine of not more than \$25. §39:3-79 Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear<sup>7</sup>:

Requirements:	A person < 14 years old shall neither operate nor ride on a bicycle unless they are wearing a nationally approved bicycle helmet. This requirement includes persons who are riding on a bicycle while in a restraining seat or in a trailer being towed by the bicycle. §39:4-10.1(a)
Sanctions for Failure to Use:	I. A person < 14 years old who violates this provision is given a warning citation. <sup>8</sup> §39:4-10.2(a) II. If it can be proven that a parent or legal guardian failed to exercise reasonable supervision or control over such person to insure that they comply with this requirement, such parent or legal guardian may for a <u>1st offense</u> be subject to a fine of not more than \$25 and for a <u>subsequent offense</u> be subject to a fine of not more than \$100. §39:4-10.2(a)

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:	None
Sanctions for Failure to Use:	

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:	I. No person shall ride on and no operator shall knowingly allow a person to ride on a vehicle or any part of a vehicle that is not designed or intended for passenger use. This requirement does not apply to an
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<sup>6</sup>A motorcycle operator does not have to comply with this requirement if the motorcycle is equipped with a State approved wind screen. §39:3-76.9

<sup>7</sup>Exemptions. Via municipal ordinances, a person may be exempt from using a bicycle helmet under the following circumstances: (1) Where the bicycle is being operated on a road or highway that is closed to motor vehicle traffic and is limited only to pedestrian or bicycle traffic or only during specified periods of time during which bicycles may be used; and, (2) where a bicycle is being operated on a trail, route, course, boardwalk, path or other area which has been set aside for pedestrian or bicycle use. However, such exemption shall not be granted when such trail, route, course, boardwalk, path or other area is immediately adjacent to a road or highway used by motor vehicle traffic and where there is no barrier of sufficient height and rigidity to prevent the inadvertent or deliberate entry of a bicycle on such road or highway. §39:4-10.1(c)

<sup>8</sup>Under separate provisions of law, a violator may be subject to a fine of not more than \$10. §39:4-203.3

**NEW JERSEY**

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements: (continued)

employee engaged in the necessary discharge of a duty. §39:4-69<sup>9</sup>  
II. No person shall ride upon the rear end of a vehicle, without the  
consent of the driver, and when so riding, no part of the person's body  
shall protrude beyond the limits of the vehicle. §39:4-61

Sanctions for a Violation:

An imprisonment term of not more than **15 days** and/or a fine of not  
more than **\$50**. §39:4-203 Note: The law does not appear to assign  
points for a violation of these requirements.

Exemptions:

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<sup>9</sup>A New Jersey appellate court has held that this provision prohibits a person from riding in the bed of a pickup truck. *Lombardo v. Hoag*, 634 A.2d 550 (N.J. Super. A.D. 1993) (Petition for certification was denied by the N.J. Supreme Court, 640 A.2d 850 (N.J. 1994).)

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

NEW MEXICO  
New Mexico Statutes Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

When a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> is in operation, all front seat occupants (driver and passengers) shall wear a safety belt. §66-7-372(A)

Note: The enforcement of this requirement does not have to be associated with the enforcement of any other statute. §66-7-373(D)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Penalty Assessment Misdemeanor: A fine of \$25<sup>3</sup>. §§66-8-7 & 66-8-116(A) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to comply with this requirement shall not in any instance constitute fault or negligence and shall not limit or apportion damages. §66-7-373(A)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

I. No person shall transport a child < 1 year old in a motor vehicle<sup>5</sup> unless such child is secured in Federally approved child passenger restraint device. §66-7-369(A)(1)

II. No person shall transport a child ≥ 1 but < 5 years old in a motor vehicle<sup>5</sup> unless such child is secured either (1) in a Federally approved child passenger restraint device or (2), if they are riding in the rear seat, by a safety belt. §66-7-369(A)(2)

III. No person shall transport a child ≥ 5 but < 11 years old in a motor vehicle<sup>5</sup> (in either the front or rear seat) unless such child is secured by a safety belt. §66-7-369(A)(3)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Penalty Assessment Misdemeanor: A fine of \$25<sup>3</sup>. §§66-8-7 & 66-8-116(A) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of these requirements.

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to wear a safety belt does not apply (1) to persons who for medical reasons cannot wear such a belt or (2) to rural letter carriers of the U.S. Postal Service when performing official duties. §66-7-371(B)

<sup>2</sup>The term "motor vehicle" refers either (1) to a motor vehicle having a gross vehicle weight ≤ 10,000 lbs. or (2) to a motor vehicle that must have a safety belt system under Federal law. §66-7-372(A)

<sup>3</sup>The following additional fees are assessed: A fee of \$10 to cover local government corrections costs; a fee of \$10 to cover the costs of court automation; a fee of \$5 to fund traffic education and enforcement; a fee of \$1 to fund judicial education; and, a fee of \$5 which is deposited into the brain injury services fund. §66-8-116.3

<sup>4</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use either a child passenger restraint system or a safety belt do not apply to children being transported in an authorized emergency vehicle, a public transportation vehicle or a school bus. §66-7-369(A)

<sup>5</sup>The term "motor vehicle" means either a passenger car, van or pickup truck. §66-7-369(A)

**NEW MEXICO**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to be secured by a child passenger restraint device or by a safety belt shall not in any instance constitute fault or negligence and shall not limit or apportion damages. §§66-7-369(B) & 66-7-373(A)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

No person < 18 years shall operate or ride on a motorcycle unless they are wearing a State approved safety helmet.<sup>6</sup> §66-7-356(A)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: An imprisonment term of not more than **90 days** and/or a fine of not more than **\$300**. §66-8-7(A) & (B) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

Unless a motorcycle has a fixed windshield, a motorcycle operator shall wear a State approved eye protection device. §66-7-355(B)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: An imprisonment term of not more than **90 days** and/or a fine of not more than **\$300**. §66-8-7(A) & (B) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

Note: A person < 11 years old cannot ride in a motor vehicle (which includes a pickup truck) unless they are secured either in a child passenger restraint device or by a safety belt. See above.

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:

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<sup>6</sup>Failure to wear a safety helmet in compliance with the law shall not constitute contributory negligence. §66-7-356(B)

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

**NEW YORK**

McKinney's Consolidated Laws of New York Note: Most Citations are to the Vehicle and Traffic Law (V&T Law) New York Code of Rules and Regulations (NYCRR)

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. A person, when transporting a child <10 years old in the back seat of a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup>, shall secure such child in a safety belt. V&T Law §1229-c(1)
- II. A person, when transporting a person <16 years old in the front seat of a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup>, shall secure such person in a safety belt. V&T Law §1229-c(2)
- III. When a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> is in operation, the driver and all front seat passengers ≥16 years old shall be secured in a safety belt. V&T Law §1229-c(3)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or Require the Use of Safety Belts:

- I. Civil Fine: A person, who violates III above, is subject to a fine of not more \$50. V&T Law §1229-c(5) In addition, although the law is not specific, it appears that a person is assessed 2 points against their driving record. 15 NYCRR 131.3(a)
- II. Civil Fine: A person, who violates either I or II above, is subject to a fine of not less than \$25 nor more than \$100. V&T Law §1229-c(5) In addition, a person is assessed 3 points against their driving record. 15 NYCRR 131.3(b)(6)(vi)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Evidence of non-compliance with these requirements shall not be admissible in any civil action with respect to liability but may be introduced as to the mitigation of damages. However, the party introducing such evidence must plead non-compliance as an affirmative defense. V&T Law §1229-c(8)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>3</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. A person, when transporting a child <4 years old in the back seat of a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup>, shall secure such child in a Federally approved child restraint system. V&T Law §1229-c(1)
- II. A person, when transporting a child <4 years old in the front seat of a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup>, shall secure such child in a Federally approved child restraint system. V&T Law §1229-c(2)

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<sup>1</sup>Exemptions. The requirements to use a safety belt do not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons who for physical or medical conditions cannot use a safety belt; and, (2) to rural letter carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while performing official duties. V&T Law §1229-c(7) & (10)

<sup>2</sup>The term "motor vehicle" does not include a bus, a school bus (except when carrying children <4 years old), an authorized emergency vehicle, a taxi or liveries. V&T Law §1229-c(4), (9) & (11) Even though the Vehicle and Traffic Law does not require the use of safety belts by persons riding in a school bus, the Education Law, nevertheless, provides that a board of education or board of trustees may via regulations provide that safety belts be installed on the school buses under its jurisdiction and that such belts be used when such vehicle is in operation. Education Law §3635-a

<sup>3</sup>Exemptions. These requirements do not apply to children who for physical or medical conditions cannot use a child restraint system. V&T Law §1229-c(7)

NEW YORK

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Requirements: (continued)

III. Persons transporting children < 4 years old in a school bus shall secure such children in a Federally approved child restraint system that is detachable or removable. V&T Law §1229-c(11)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Civil Fine: A person who violates any of the above requirements is subject to a fine of not less than \$25 nor more than \$100. V&T Law §1229-c(5) In addition, a person is assessed 3 points against their driving record. 15 NYCRR 131.3(b)(6)(vi)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Evidence of non-compliance with these requirements shall not be admissible in any civil action with respect to liability but may be introduced as to the mitigation of damages. However, the party introducing such evidence must plead non-compliance as an affirmative defense. V&T Law §1229-c(8)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

Any person who operates or rides on a motorcycle shall wear a State approved protective helmet.<sup>5</sup> V&T Law §381(6)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Imprisonment for not more than 30 days and/or a fine of not more than \$100. V&T Law §381(13) In addition, although the law is not specific, it appears that a person is assessed 2 points against their driving record. 15 NYCRR 131.3(a)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

Any person who operates a motorcycle shall wear State approved goggles or a face shield. V&T Law §381(7)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Imprisonment for not more than 30 days and/or a fine of not more than \$100. V&T Law §381(13) In addition, although the law is not specific, it appears that a person is assessed 2 points against their driving record. 15 NYCRR 131.3(a)

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<sup>4</sup>Local law enforcement authorities may exempt a person from this requirement when they are participating in an authorized parade or other public exhibition. V&T Law §381(6)

<sup>5</sup>Although the law is uncertain, there is some authority to indicate that the failure to wear protective headgear might be a factor that can be used to reduce a damage award in favor of a motorcycle operator or passenger who have sustained injuries in a traffic accident. *Penzell v. State*, 466 N.Y.S.2d 562 (Ct.Cl. 1983)

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear<sup>6</sup>:

## Requirements:

A person < 14 years old who operates a bicycle shall wear a nationally approved bicycle helmet. No bicycle operator shall allow a person ≥ 5 but < 14 years old to ride on a bicycle unless they are wearing a nationally approved bicycle helmet.<sup>7</sup> V&T Law §1238(5)(a) & (b)

Note: This provision of State law does not apply where a county, city, town or village has enacted a local law or ordinance similar to such law. V&T Law §1238(9)

## Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Civil Fine: A fine of not more than \$50.<sup>8</sup> V&T Law §1238(6)(a)

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

## Requirements:

None

## Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

## Requirements:

I. An auto truck (i.e., a pickup truck) cannot be operated > 5 miles if more than one-third of the vehicles passengers are standing.<sup>9</sup> V&T Law §1222(1)

II. An operator (or an owner) of an auto truck (i.e., pickup truck) shall not allow such vehicle to be driven > 5 miles while there are > 5 persons in the bed of such vehicle who are < 18 years old. Important. This requirement does not apply if a person > 18 years old is riding in the bed of the vehicle with these persons. V&T Law §1222(2)

## Sanctions for a Violation:

Traffic Infraction: 1st offense-An imprisonment term of not more than 15 days and/or a fine of not more than \$100. 2nd offense (within 18 months)-An imprisonment term of not more than 45 days and/or a fine of not more than \$200. 3rd or subsequent offense (within 18 months)-

<sup>6</sup>**Other Requirements.** I. A person is prohibited from transporting a child < 1 year old on a bicycle. This prohibition includes carrying such a child in a pack fastened to the operator. There are no sanctions for a 1st violation of this prohibition. However, a 2nd offender is subject to a civil fine of not more than \$50. V&T Law §1238(1) In addition, a person is prohibited from transporting a child ≥ 1 but < 5 years old on a bicycle unless such child is (1) either wearing a nationally approved bicycle helmet or (2) placed in a separate seat which is attached to the bicycle. V&T Law §1238(2)(a) & (b) A person, who violates this requirement, is subject to a civil fine of not more than \$50. V&T Law §1238(3)

<sup>7</sup>Failure to comply with these requirements shall not constitute contributory negligence or assumption of risk and shall not in any way bar, preclude or foreclose an action for personal injury or wrongful death by or on behalf of such person. In addition, such a failure shall not diminish or reduce the damages recoverable in any action. V&T Law §1238(7)

<sup>8</sup>If the violation of the person < 14 years old occurs in the presence of that person's parents or guardian where such parent or guardian is ≥ 18 years, the summons for the offense is issued only to the parent or guardian. V&T Law §1238(8)

<sup>9</sup>This requirement does not apply if the truck (1) has suitable seats that are attached to the vehicle's body, (2) has side racks of a least three feet in height above the vehicle's floor and (3) has tail board or gate which is securely closed. V&T Law §1222(1)

**NEW YORK**

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle: (continued)

Sanctions for a Violation: (continued)

An imprisonment term of not more than **90 days** and/or a fine of not more than **\$300**. V&T Law §1800(a) & (b) In addition, although the law is not specific, it appears that a person is assessed 2 points against their driving record. 15 NYCRR 131.3(a)

Exemptions:

- I. The requirement of I above does not apply to persons or corporations operating an agency or agencies for public service. V&T Law §1222(1)
- II. The requirement in II above does not apply if there is at least one person > 18 years old in the body of the truck. V&T Law §1222(2)

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

NORTH CAROLINA  
General Statutes of North Carolina

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. When a passenger motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> is in forward motion, the driver and front seat passengers  $\geq 16$  years old shall wear safety belts. §20-135.2A(a)
- II. Except as noted below, when operating a passenger motor vehicle<sup>2</sup>, the driver shall secure a front seat passenger  $< 16$  years old in a safety belt. §20-135.2A(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Non-Criminal Infraction: A fine of \$25. A person convicted of this offense cannot be assessed court costs. §20-135.2A(e) Note: No drivers license points or insurance surcharges shall be assessed as a result of a violation of these requirements. §20-135.2A(f)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Evidence of failure to comply with these requirements shall not be admissible in any criminal or civil trial, action or proceeding except (1) for a violation of such requirement, (2) as a justification for stopping the vehicle or (3) for detaining the vehicle's operator or passengers. §20-135.2A(d)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>3</sup>:

Requirements:

A person, who is transporting a child  $< 12$  years old, shall properly secure such child in a Federally approved child passenger restraint system (car safety seat). As an alternative, a person, who is transporting a child  $\geq 4$  years old may secure such child in a safety belt. §20-137.1(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

A fine of \$25. §20-137.1(c) Note: No driver license points or insurance points shall be assessed for a violation of this requirement. §20-137.1(d)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons who for physical or medical reasons cannot appropriate use a safety belt; (2) to rural letter carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while performing official duties; (3) to drivers or passengers who frequently stop and leave a vehicle (e.g, delivering property) and the speed of the vehicle between stops is  $\leq 20$  MPH; (4) to persons who are operating certain vehicles that are being used for agricultural or commercial purposes; and, (5) to persons operating or riding in motor vehicles that are not required by Federal law to have safety belts. §20-135.2A(c)

<sup>2</sup>A "passenger motor vehicle" means a motor vehicle with motive power designed for carrying  $\leq 10$  passengers but does not include a motorcycle, a motorized pedacycle or a trailer. §20-135.2A(b)

<sup>3</sup>**Exemptions.** This requirement does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To children being transported in ambulances or other emergence vehicles; (2) to children when personal needs are being attended to; (3) to children who cannot be restrained in either a child passenger restraint system or safety belt because all such restraints or safety belt seating positions have been occupied; and, (4) to children who are riding in motor vehicles that are not required by Federal law to have safety belts. §20-137.1(b)

**NORTH CAROLINA**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of this requirement shall not constitute negligence per se or contributory negligence per se. In addition, such a violation is not evidence of negligence or contributory negligence. §20-137.1(d)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

No person shall operate or ride on a motorcycle or moped unless they are wearing State approved safety helmets. §20-140.4(a)(2)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

**Non-Criminal Infraction: A fine of \$25.** A person convicted of this offense cannot be assessed court costs. §§20-135.2A(e) & 20-140.4(c)  
Note: No drivers license points or insurance surcharges shall be assessed as a result of a violation of these requirements. §§20-135.2A(f) & 20-140.4(c)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

Note: This requirement is indirectly covered by the above requirement to wear a safety helmet.

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

A person shall not transport a child < 12 years old in the open bed or cargo area of a vehicle. An open bed or cargo area is a bed or cargo area without permanent overhead restraining construction. §20-135.2B(a)

Sanctions for a Violation:

**Non-Criminal Infraction: A fine of \$25.** A person is not assessed court costs for a violation of this requirement. §20-135.2B(c) Note: No drivers license points or insurance surcharge shall be assessed on account of a violation of this requirement. §20-135.2B(d)

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<sup>4</sup>A violation of this requirement shall not be considered negligence per se or contributory negligence per se in any civil action. §20-140.4(b)

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle: (continued)

Exemptions:

This requirement does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) A supervising adult is present in the bed or cargo area; (2) the child is secured or restrained in a safety belt; (3) an emergency situation exists; (4) the vehicle is being used in an official parade; (5) the vehicle is operated in an agricultural enterprise; and, (6) the vehicle is being operated in a county with incorporated areas of  $\leq 3,500$  population. §20-135.2B(b)



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

**NORTH DAKOTA**  
North Dakota Century Code Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

When a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> is in operation, front seat occupants (driver and passengers) shall wear safety belts. §39-21-41.4 See Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems below.

**Secondary Enforcement.** A citation for a violation of this requirement cannot be issued by a law enforcement officer unless the driver has been lawfully stopped or detained for another violation. §39-21-41.5

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

**Non-Criminal Fee:** A fee of not more than \$20. §§39-06.1-06(9) & 39-21-46(1) Note: Driver's license points may not be assessed against any person for a violation of this requirement. §39-21-41.5

Effect on Civil Liability:

There are no statutory provisions.<sup>3</sup>

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

I. When a motor vehicle<sup>5</sup> is in motion, a passenger (child) <3 years old must be secured in a Federally approved child restraint system. §39-21-41.2(1)

II. When a motor vehicle<sup>5</sup> is in motion, a passenger (child) ≥3 but ≤10 years old must be secured either (1) in a Federally approved child restraint system or (2) in a safety belt. §39-21-41.2(1)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

A fine of not more than \$20. §§39-21-41.2(2) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to wear a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To driver of implements of husbandry or farm vehicles; (2) to rural mail carriers while on official business; (3) to persons who for physical or medical reasons cannot use a safety belt; and, (4) to persons who cannot use a safety belt because all of the available belts are already in use. §39-21-41.4

<sup>2</sup>The term "motor vehicle" applies only to motor vehicles that were (1) designed to carry fewer than 11 persons and (2) originally manufactured with safety belts. §39-21-41.4

<sup>3</sup>Give the holding in *Halvorson v. Voeller*, 336 N.W.2d 118 (N.D. 1983), concerning the non-use of protective headgear by a motorcycle rider, it is possible that evidence of a failure to wear a safety belt could be admitted to determine if such a failure was a factor in the causing injuries to the non-wearer.

<sup>4</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use either a child restraint system or a safety belt does not apply either (1) to a child if all of the available safety belts in the vehicle are in use by other family members or (2) to a child being transported in an emergency situation. §39-21-41.2(1)

<sup>5</sup>The term "motor vehicle" does not include a motor vehicle that was not equipped with safety belts when it was manufactured. §39-21-41.2(1)

**NORTH DAKOTA**

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of these requirements is not, in itself, evidence of negligence and a violation is not admissible in any proceeding other than one charging such a violation. §39-21-41.2(3)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear<sup>6</sup>:

Requirements:

No person <18 years old may operate or ride on a motorcycle unless they wear State approved protective headgear. §39-10.2-06(1) This requirement does not apply to persons riding within an enclosed cab or on a golf cart. §39-10.2-06(2)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Infraction: A fine of not more than \$500.<sup>7</sup> §§12.1-32-01(7) & 39-07-06 Note: A person violating this requirement is assessed two (2) points against their driver's license record. §39-06.1-10(3)(a)(28)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:

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<sup>6</sup>In a traffic accident situation, evidence of failure to wear protective headgear may be admitted into evidence to determine if such a failure was a factor in causing injuries to the non-user. In analyzing this evidence, the court should also consider whether a person would have worn a helmet in order to avoid or to mitigate their injuries. *Halvorson v. Voeller*, 336 N.W.2d 118 (N.D. 1983)

<sup>7</sup>A person, who is convicted of any subsequent infraction within 18 months of a previous infraction offense conviction, may be sentenced as if they had been convicted of a Class B Misdemeanor. The sanctions for this misdemeanor are an imprisonment term of not more than 30 days and/or a fine of not more than \$500. §12.1-32-01(6) & (7)

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

OHIO  
Ohio Revised Code Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. No person shall operate an automobile<sup>2</sup> (or school bus) less they wear a safety belt<sup>3</sup>. §4513.263(A)(2) & (B)(1)
  - II. A person shall not operate an automobile<sup>2</sup> unless all front seat passengers are wearing safety belts<sup>3</sup>. §4513.263(A)(3) & (B)(2)
  - III. A front seat passenger shall not ride in an automobile<sup>2</sup> unless they are wearing a safety belt<sup>3</sup>. §4513.263(A)(2) & (B)(3)
- Secondary Enforcement.** A law enforcement officer shall not stop a person operating an automobile for the sole purpose of determining a violation of these requirements. §4513.263(D)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

- I. A person who violates I<sup>4</sup> above is subject to a fine of **\$25**. §4513.99(F)
- II. A passenger who violates III above is subject to a fine of **\$15**. §4513.99(G)

Note: No points are to be assessed against person's driving record for a violation of the above requirements. §4507.021(G)(16)

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of these requirements may be considered as either contributory negligence or tortious conduct if the violation contributed to the harm. And, such failure may be used to diminish recovery of compensatory damages in a civil action. §4513.263(F)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>5</sup>:

Requirements:

A motor vehicle<sup>6</sup> operator (except a taxicab or public service vehicle operator), who transports a child who is <4 years old or who weighs <40 lbs., shall secure such child in a Federally approved child restraint system.<sup>7</sup> §4511.81(A)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To automobile operators while performing official duties for the U.S. Postal Service; (2) to automobile operators who are delivering newspapers; and, (3) to persons who for physical reasons cannot use a safety belt. §4513.263(C)

<sup>2</sup>The term "automobile" means any commercial tractor, passenger car, commercial car or truck that is required to have safety belts under Federal law. §4513.263(A)(1)

<sup>3</sup>The law refers to a safety belt as an "occupant restraining device." §4513.263(A)(2)

<sup>4</sup>Note: The law is not clear as to whether there is a penalty for a violation of II. The penalty provision of the law, §4513.99, does not provide a specific sanction for a violation of this requirement. However, the sanction for a violation of I may apply.

<sup>5</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a child restraint system does not apply when an emergency exist that threatens the life of either the vehicle operator or the child. §4511.81(E)

<sup>6</sup>This requirement only applies to motor vehicles that are required to be equipped with seat belts under Federal law. §4511.81(A)

<sup>7</sup>This same requirement applies to persons who transport children in motor vehicles (except taxicabs) for nursery schools, kindergartens or day-care centers. §4511.81(B)

**OHIO**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

1st offense (Minor Misdemeanor)-A fine of not more than **\$100**. §§2929.21(D) &4511.99(H)(1)(a) Subsequent offense (4th Degree Misdemeanor)-An imprisonment term of not more than **30 days** and/or a fine of not more than **\$250**. §§2929.21(B)(4), (C)(4) & (D), 4511.81(F) and 4511.99(H)(1) & (2) In addition, although the law is not specific, it appears that a person is assessed 2 points against their driving record. §4507.021(G)(16)

Effect on Civil Liability:

The failure an operator to comply with this requirement is not negligence which can be imputed to the child. Evidence of such a failure is not admissible in any civil action of the child to recover damages against any other person. §4511.81(D)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear<sup>8</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. No person <18 years old, who holds a motorcycle operator's license, shall operate or be a passenger on a motorcycle unless they are wearing a State approved protective helmet. §4511.53 (¶6)
- II. No person (regardless of age), who holds a novice motorcycle operator's license, shall operate or be a passenger on a motorcycle unless they are wearing a State approved protective helmet. §4511.53 (¶6)
- III. A person (regardless of age), who is a passenger on a motorcycle operated by a person < 18 years, must wear a State approved protective helmet. §4511.53 (¶6)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

1st offense (Minor Misdemeanor)-A fine of not more than **\$100**. 2nd offense (within 1 year) (4th Degree Misdemeanor)-An imprisonment term of not more than **30 days** and/or a fine of not more than **\$250**. 3rd or subsequent offense (within 1 year) (3rd Degree Misdemeanor)-An imprisonment term of not more than **60 days** and/or a fine of not more than **\$500**. §§2929.21(B)(3), (B)(4), (C)(3), (C)(4) & (D) and 4511.99(D) In addition, although the law is not specific, it appears that a person is assessed 2 points against their driving record. §4507.021(G)(16)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

No person shall operate or ride on a motorcycle without using safety glasses or other protective eye device. §4511.53 (¶6)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

1st offense (Minor Misdemeanor)-A fine of not more than **\$100**. 2nd offense (within 1 year) (4th Degree Misdemeanor)-An imprisonment term of not more than **30 days** and/or a fine of not more than **\$250**.

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<sup>8</sup>Motorized Bicycle. A person <18 years old, who operates a motorized bicycle, shall wear a protective helmet. §4511.521 A violation of this requirement is a Minor Misdemeanor. §4511.99(F) A person, who has been convicted of a Minor Misdemeanor, is subject to a fine of not more than **\$100**. §2929.21(D)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Use: (continued)

3rd or subsequent offense (within 1 year) (3rd Degree Misdemeanor)-An imprisonment term of not more than **60 days** and/or a fine of not more than **\$500**. §§2929.21(B)(3), (B)(4), (C)(3), (C)(4) & (D) and 4511.99(D) In addition, although the law is not specific, it appears that a person is assessed 2 points against their driving record. §4507.021(G)(16)

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

A driver of a truck, trailer or semitrailer shall not knowingly permit a person < 16 years old to ride in the vehicle's unenclosed or unroofed cargo storage area when such vehicle is traveling >25 MPH. §4511.51(E)

Sanctions for a Violation:

Minor Misdemeanor: A fine of not more than **\$100**. §§2929.21(d) & 4511.99(F) In addition, although the law is not specific, it appears that a person is assessed 2 points against their driving record. §4507.021(G)(16)

Exemptions:

This requirement does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) The person < 16 years old is seated in the cargo area and is wearing a safety belt. And, (2) an emergency exist that threatens the life of either the driver or the person < 16 years old. §4511.(E)(1) & (2)



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

OKLAHOMA  
Oklahoma Statutes Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

I. When a passenger car<sup>2</sup> is in use, the driver and every front seat passenger shall wear a safety seat belt system.<sup>3</sup> Title 47, §12-417(A)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Fine<sup>3</sup> and court costs cannot exceed \$20.<sup>4</sup> No points shall be assessed against an offender's driving record. Title 47, §§12-417(E) & 12-418

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of this requirement shall not be used in a civil proceeding and use or nonuse of a seat belt shall not be submitted into evidence in any civil suit. Title 47, §12-420

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>5</sup>:

Requirements:

I. A resident driver, when transporting a child <4 years old and weighing ≤60 lbs. in a motor vehicle, shall secure such child in a Federally approved child restraint system. Title 47, §11-1112(A) & (C)(1)

II. A resident driver, when transporting children 4 or 5 years old, must secure such child in either a child passenger restraint system or a seat belt. Title 47, §11-1112(B) & (C)(1)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

A fine of \$10 plus court costs of not more than \$15. Title 47, §11-1112(G) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of these requirements.

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<sup>1</sup>Exemptions. The requirement to use a safety seat belt system does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To drivers or passengers who are unable to wear such a belt for medical reasons; and, (2) to route carriers of the U.S. Postal Service. Title 47, §12-417(B) & (C)

<sup>2</sup>The safety belt requirement applies to motor vehicles that are required to have safety belts under Federal law. In addition, the term "passenger car" generally means any type of conveyance which transports persons or property on a highway. However, the term does not include bicycles, trailers (except travel trailers and rental trailers), implements of husbandry (farm vehicles), trucks, truck-tractors, recreational vehicles, motorcycles and motorized bicycles. Title 47, §§12-417 & 1102

<sup>3</sup>The operator of a school bus shall wear a seat belt when such vehicle is in motion. A person, who violates this requirement, commits a misdemeanor and is subject to fine of not less than \$25 nor more than \$100. Title 70, §24-121

<sup>4</sup>Title 47, §12-418 provides for a fine of \$10 and court costs of \$15 for a violation of the safety belt use requirement. Nevertheless, Title 47, §12-417(E) limits the total fine and court costs to no more than \$20.

<sup>5</sup>Exemptions. These requirements do not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To a driver who is operating a school bus, taxicab, moped, motorcycle or a motor vehicle that is not required to be equipped with safety belts; (2) to a driver of an ambulance or emergency vehicle; (3) to a driver where all of the available seat belts are in use; and, (4) to children who for medical reasons are unable to use either a child restraint system or a seat belt. Title 47, §11-1112(C)(2), (3), (4) & (5)

**OKLAHOMA**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of these requirements shall not be admissible as evidence in any civil action or proceeding for damages. Also, in any action brought by or on behalf of an infant for personal injuries or wrongful death, the failure to comply with these requirements shall not be used in the aggravation or mitigation of damages. Title 47, §11-1112(E) & (F)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

When operating or riding on a motorcycle or motor scooter,<sup>6</sup> a person < 18 years old shall wear a State approved crash helmet. Title 47, §40-105(G)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: An imprisonment term of not more than **6 months** and/or a fine of not more than **\$500**. Title 47, §§17-101(c) & 40-106  
Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

If a motorcycle or motor scooter is not equipped with a windshield, the operator shall wear goggles or a face shield which is designed to protect them from foreign objects. Title 47, §40-105(B)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: An imprisonment term of not more than **6 months** and/or a fine of not more than **\$500**. Title 47, §§17-101(c) & 40-106  
Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear<sup>7</sup>:

Requirements:

When operating an electric-assisted bicycle, a person ≤ 18 years old shall wear a nationally approved bicycle helmet. Title 47, §19-201(5)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: An imprisonment term of not more than **6 months** and/or a fine of not more than **\$500**. Title 47, §17-101(c) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

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<sup>6</sup>Applies only when riding motor scooters on a public road. Title 47, §40-105

<sup>7</sup>The Oklahoma Legislature has adopted a resolution encouraging municipalities to enact ordinances that require persons < 16 years old, who are riding on a bicycle (operator or passenger), to wear a safety helmet. House Concurrent Resolution 1003 adopted in 1997

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

OREGON  
Oregon Revised Statutes and Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR)

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. Before a person operates a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup>, they must secure themselves in a safety belt. §811.210(1)(a).
- II. A driver cannot operate a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> unless all passengers < 16 years old are secured in a safety belt, child safety system or safety harness. §811.210(1)(b)
- III. A motor vehicle passenger ≥ 16 years old must secure themselves in a safety belt. §811.210(1)(c)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Class D Traffic Infraction: A fine of not more than \$75.<sup>3</sup>  
§§153.615(2)(d) & 811.210(3)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Evidence of a failure to comply with these requirements may be admitted only to mitigate damages. The mitigation of damages cannot be > 5% of the damages that would have otherwise been awarded. §18.590(1) However, this restriction does not apply if nonuse of a safety belt was as substantial or contributing cause of the accident which resulted in the personal injuries. §18.590(2)(B)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. A driver, when transporting a child < 4 years old and weighing ≤ 40 lbs. in a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup>, must secure such child in State/Federally approved child safety system. §§811.210(1)(b) & (2)(a) and 815.055(1)(b)
- II. A driver, when transporting a child ≥ 4 years old in a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup>, must secure such child in either a safety belt or State approved safety harness. §811.210(1)(b) & (2)(b)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirements to use a safety belt, child safety system or safety harness do not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons riding in privately owned commercial vehicles which are designed to carry persons for compensation (profit) or to carry property (This exemption does not apply to pickup trucks weighing < 8,000 lbs.); (2) to persons riding in vehicles that were not required to be equipped with safety belts or safety harnesses at the time the vehicle was manufactured; (3) to persons who are riding in vehicles that have been specifically exempted from having safety belts or safety harnesses under §815.080; (4) to a person who cannot use either safety belt, child safety system or safety harness because such use would be impractical or harmful to the person by reason of physical condition, medical problem or body size; (5) to passengers where all of the available seating positions are already occupied; (6) to persons being transported in the custody of a law enforcement officers; (7) to persons who are delivering newspapers or mail when in the regular course of work; and, (8) to persons who are administering medical aid to another individual while riding in an ambulance where the use of a safety belt or safety harness would substantially inhibit such aid. §§801.210, 811.215 & 811.220

<sup>2</sup>The requirements to use either a safety belt or child safety system applies to motor vehicles that are primarily designed for the transportation of individuals and that have seating for one or more passengers side-by-side with the operator. §811.215(3) & 815.080(1)(a)

<sup>3</sup>Depending upon the number of traffic offenses a person has committed, a person may have to participate in a Driver Improvement Program. Under this program, a person's driving privileges can be restricted and, in some cases, suspended. ORA 735-72-000 et seq.

OREGON

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Class D Traffic Infraction: A fine of not more than \$75.<sup>3</sup>  
§§153.615(2)(d) & 811.210(3)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Evidence of a failure to comply with these requirements may be admitted only to mitigate damages. The mitigation of damages cannot be >5% of the damages that would have otherwise been awarded. §18.590(1) However, this restriction does not apply if nonuse of a safety belt was as substantial or contributing cause of the accident which resulted in the personal injuries. §18.590(2)(B)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

A person, who operates or rides on a motorcycle or a moped, must wear a motorcycle helmet. §§814.260(1), 814.269(1), 814.275(1) & 814.280(1)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Class D Traffic Infraction: A fine of not more than \$75.<sup>3</sup>  
§§153.615(2)(d), 814.260(4), 814.269(3), 814.275(3) & 814.280(3)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

Note: This requirement is indirectly covered by the above requirement to wear a motorcycle helmet.

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear<sup>5</sup>:

Requirements:

I. A person < 16 years old, who operates or rides on a bicycle, must wear protective headgear. §814.485(1)  
II. A person cannot operate a bicycle with a passenger < 16 years old unless such passenger is wearing protective headgear. §814.486(1)(b)  
III. It is illegal for a parent or legal guardian to allow their child < 16 years old to operate or ride a bicycle unless such child wears protective headgear. §814.486(1)(b)

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<sup>4</sup>The requirement to wear a motorcycle helmet does not apply if (1) the person is riding in an enclosed cab or (2) a person is riding in a vehicle that is designed to travel with three wheels at a speed < 15 MPH. §§814.260(2), 814.269(2), 814.275(2), 814.280(2) & 814.290

<sup>5</sup>A person is exempt from this requirement if the use of bicycle protective headgear would violate a religious belief or practice of the person. §814.487

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Traffic Infraction: A fine of not more than \$25.<sup>6</sup> §§814.485(3) & 814.486(3)

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:

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<sup>6</sup>If the offender is  $\leq 11$  years old, a citation for a violation of this requirement is issued to that child's parent or legal guardian. §814.488(1) If the offender is  $\geq 12$  but  $< 16$  years old, a citation for a violation of this requirement may be issued to either the child or to the child's parent or legal guardian. Note: Citations cannot be issued to both the child and the parent or legal guardian. §814.488(2)



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

PENNSYLVANIA  
Pennsylvania Statutes Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

I. When a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> is in operation, the driver and front seat passengers shall wear a safety belt. Title 75, §4581(a)(2)  
II. If a passenger is  $\geq 4$  but  $< 18$  years old, the motor vehicle operator shall secure such passenger in a safety belt. Title 75, §4581(a)(2)  
**Secondary Enforcement.** A conviction for a violation of these requirements shall occur only as a secondary action when a driver has been convicted of another offense under the Vehicle Code. Title 75, §4581(a)(2) & (b)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Summary Offense: A fine of \$10. No other costs can be assessed for a violation of these requirements. In addition, a violation of such requirements shall not result in the assessment of points against a person's driver record and is not considered to be a moving violation. Title 75, §4581(2) (¶2) & (b) A violation of these requirements cannot be used to increase insurance premiums.<sup>3</sup> Title 75, §4581(h) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of these requirements.

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of these requirements cannot be admitted into evidence at a civil trial. A jury cannot be instructed that such a violation constitutes a violation. In addition, such a violation cannot be considered contributory negligence.<sup>4</sup> Title 75, §4581(e)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>5</sup>:

Requirements:

Where there is a seating position available with a safety belt, a person, who is transporting a child  $< 4$  years old in a motor vehicle<sup>6</sup>, must

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<sup>1</sup>Exemptions. The requirement to wear a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons riding in motor vehicles manufactured before July 1, 1966; (2) to persons who for physical or medical reasons cannot wear a safety belt; (3) to rural letter carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while performing official duties; and, (4) to drivers who make frequent stops for the purpose of delivering goods or services and where the vehicle is traveling  $< 15$  MPH. Title 75, §4581(2)(i), (ii), (iii) & (iv)

<sup>2</sup>The term "motor vehicle" means a passenger car, Class I truck (weighing  $\leq 5,000$  lbs.), Class II truck (weighing  $\geq 7,001$  but  $\leq 7,000$  lbs.) or motor home. Title 75, §§1916(a)(1) & 4581(a)(2)

<sup>3</sup>In addition, under separate statutory provisions, a violation of these requirements shall not be used as evidence by an insurer for any purpose. Title 75, §4585

<sup>4</sup>Evidence of a violation of these requirements can only be admitted at a criminal trial to prove such violation. I.e., such evidence cannot be admitted into evidence in any other criminal proceeding. Title 75, §4581(F)

<sup>5</sup>Exemptions. The requirement to use a child passenger restraint system does not apply if the use of such a system would be impractical for physical (e.g., size of the child) or medical reasons. Title 75, §4581(g)

<sup>6</sup>The term "motor vehicle" means a passenger car, Class I truck (weighing  $\leq 5,000$  lbs.), Class II truck (weighing  $\geq 5,001$  but  $\leq 7,000$  lbs.), classic motor vehicle, antique motor vehicle or motor home. Title 75, §§1916(a)(1) & 4581(a)(1)

PENNSYLVANIA

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Requirements: (continued)

secure such child in a Federally approved child passenger restraint system. Title 75, §4581(a)(1)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Summary Offense: A fine of not more than \$25. Title 75, §4581(b)  
A violation is not considered a moving violation. Title 75, §4581(b)  
And, a violation of these requirements cannot be used to increase  
insurance premiums.<sup>3</sup> Title 75, §4581(h) Note: The law does not  
appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of these requirements cannot be admitted into evidence at  
a civil trial. A jury cannot be instructed that such a violation constitutes  
a violation. In addition, such a violation cannot be considered  
contributory negligence.<sup>4</sup> Title 75, §4581(e)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear<sup>7</sup>:

Requirements:

No person shall operate or ride on a motorcycle or motor-driven cycle  
(except a motorized pedalcycle) unless they are wearing State approved  
protective headgear. Title 75, §3525(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Summary Offense: A fine of \$25. Title 75, §6502(a) Note: The law  
does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device<sup>7</sup>:

Requirements:

No person shall operate or ride a motorcycle or motor-driven cycle  
(except a motorized pedalcycle) unless they are wearing a State  
approved eye-protection device. Title 75, §3525(b)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Summary Offense: A fine of \$25. Title 75, §6502(a) Note: The law  
does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear<sup>8</sup>:

Requirements:

A person < 12 years old shall wear a nationally approved pedalcycle  
(bicycle) helmet when operating or riding on a pedalcycle (bicycle).<sup>9</sup>  
Title 75, §3510(a)

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<sup>7</sup>The requirement to wear protective headgear and an eye-protection device does not apply to operators or occupants of a three-wheeled motorcycle equipped with an enclosed cab. Title 75, §3525(d)

<sup>8</sup>This requirement does not apply if the child < 12 years old can produce a statement from the family's church authorities attesting that it is against the tenets of the family's religion to wear a helmet. Title 75, §3510(b.3)

<sup>9</sup>This requirement also applies if the person < 12 years old is riding either in a restraining seat attached to the pedalcycle (bicycle) or in a trailer towed by a pedalcycle (bicycle). Title 75, §3510(a)

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Summary Offense: A fine of not more than \$25.<sup>10</sup> Title 75, §§3510(d) & 6502(a) Note: A violation of this requirement shall not be used as evidence in any civil action. Such evidence shall not be used to instruct a jury that such conduct constituted a violation of this requirement. And, such evidence shall not be considered as contributory negligence. Title 75, §3510(c)

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

Note: A child < 4 years old, who is being transported in the cargo area of a motor vehicle, must be secured in a child passenger restraint system. Title 75, §4581(a)(1)

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:

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<sup>10</sup>The parent or legal guardian of the child who violates this requirement shall be jointly and severally liable with such child for the amount of the fine. Title 75, §3510(d)



**JURISDICTION:**  
General Reference:

**PUERTO RICO**  
Law of Puerto Rico Annotated (Updated through 1995)

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

When a motor vehicle is being operated, the driver and all passengers shall wear safety belts.<sup>2</sup> Title 9, §1212(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Administrative Offense: A fine of **\$10**. Title 9, §§1214 & 1871(72)  
Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Effect on Civil Liability:

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>3</sup>:

Requirements:

A person, when transporting a child <4 years old, shall secure such child in a protective car seat. Title 9, §1212(c)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Administrative Offense: A fine of **\$10**. Title 9, §§1214 & 1871(72)  
Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Effect on Civil Liability:

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

A person operating or riding on a motorcycle, motor-driven bicycle or motor scooter, shall wear a helmet. Title 9, §1146(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Administrative Offense: A fine of **\$10**. Title 9, §1871(65) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

A person operating a motorcycle, motor-driven bicycle or motor scooter shall use either eyeglasses or spectacles or shall install a windshield on the vehicle. Title 9, §1146(a)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a safety belt does not apply if (1) a person has a physical or medical condition that impedes the use of such a device or (2) a driver or a passenger of a public service vehicle where such vehicle has been given an exemption by the Public Service Commission due to the fact it is rendering service on short routes. Title 9, §1212(a) In addition, the requirement to use a safety belt only applies to drivers or passengers of motor vehicles that are required to have such belts. Title 9, §§1211 & 1212(a)

<sup>2</sup>This requirement appears to apply only to front seat vehicle occupants. Puerto Rico law requires that certain vehicles (generally those manufactured during and after the 1965 model year) have to be equipped with at least two (2) safety belts in the front seat. Title 9, §1211(a), (b) & (c) Drivers and passengers are only obligated to wear a safety belts pursuant to this requirement. Title 9, §1212(a)

<sup>3</sup>**Exemption.** A child who suffers from any type of disability which prevents them from traveling safely in a protective car seat is exempt from this requirement. Title 9, §1212(c)

**PUERTO RICO**

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Administrative Offense: A fine of **\$10**. Title 9, §1871(65) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

It is illegal to ride a bicycle upon a public highway of high vehicular density without wearing a nationally approved protective helmet.<sup>4</sup> Title 9, §1181(b)(11)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: 1st offense-An imprisonment term of not more than **10 days** and/or a fine of not more than **\$100**. 2nd offense (within 1 year)-An imprisonment term of not more than **20 days** and/or a fine of not more than **\$200**. 3rd or subsequent offense (within 1 year)-An imprisonment term of not more than **6 months** and/or a fine of not more than **\$500**. Title 9, §1221(a) & (b) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

No person shall ride (1) upon the cargo or (2) in any other part of a vehicle except the cab. Title 9, §1373

Sanctions for a Violation:

Misdemeanor: Imprisonment for not more than **10 days** and/or a fine of not more than **\$15**.<sup>5</sup> Title 9, §1752(a)

Exemptions:

This prohibition does not apply to public service vehicles (e.g., fire engines, garbage trucks, et al.) that belong either to municipal governments or to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Title 9, §1373

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<sup>4</sup>A parent or guardian may not authorize or knowingly permit a child to violate this requirement. Title 9, §1182 The sanctions for authorizing or permitting such a violation by a child are the same as noted for failure to use bicycle protective headgear.

<sup>5</sup>If a violation resulted in either an injury or a death, the following sanctions are imposed: Imprisonment for not more than **6 months** and/or a fine of not less than **\$100** nor more than **\$500**. In addition, the court may suspend the offender's driving privileges for not more than **2 years**. Title 9, §1374

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

RHODE ISLAND  
General Laws of Rhode Island

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

When a motor vehicle is in operation, the driver and passengers > 12 years old, riding in either the front or back seat, shall wear safety belts.<sup>2</sup> §31-22-22(f) & (g) (¶1)

**Secondary Enforcement.** No motor vehicle may be stopped by a law enforcement officer for a violation of this requirement. §31-22-22(j)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

The only sanction for a violation of this requirement is a Verbal Warning.<sup>2</sup> §31-22-22(k) No record shall be maintained regarding a violation of this requirement. §31-22-22(l) & (m)

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of this requirement is not considered as negligence and the failure to wear a safety belt cannot be admitted into evidence in the trail of any civil action. §31-22-22(g) (¶2)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>3</sup>:

Requirements:

I. A driver shall transport a child ≤5 years old in the back seat of a motor vehicle unless such vehicle does not have a back seat.<sup>4</sup> §31-22-22(a)

II. A driver, when transporting a child ≤3 years old in a motor vehicle, shall secure such child in a Federally approved child passenger restraint system. §31-22-22(a)

III. A driver, when transporting a child > 3 but ≤12 years old in either the front or back seat of a motor vehicle, shall secure such child in either a Federally approved child passenger restraint system, a safety belt or safety harness.<sup>2</sup> §31-22-22(b) (¶1)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

I. A person, who violates the requirement in I or II above, is subject

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to wear a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons riding in motor vehicles manufactured before July 1, 1966; (2) to persons who are unable to wear a safety belt for physical or medical reasons; (3) to persons riding in motor vehicles that are not required by Federal law to have safety belts; and, (4) to letter carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while performing official duties. §31-22-22(h)

<sup>2</sup>I. Under separate provisions, safety belts shall be worn by all passengers riding in a child care vehicle. §31-22-11.6 This section does not provide a sanction for its violation. As such, a violation would be a misdemeanor under the general penalty provision of vehicle code. The sanctions for such a misdemeanor are an imprisonment term of not more than 1 year and/or a fine of not more than \$500. §31-27-13(a) & (b) II. Also, under separate statutory provisions, a person, when operating either a jitney, bus, private bus, school bus or trackless trolley coach, shall wear a safety belt. §31-23-41 A person, who violates this requirement, commits a misdemeanor and is subject to an imprisonment term of not more than 1 year and/or a fine of not more than \$500. §§31-23-41 & 31-27-13(b)

<sup>3</sup>Note: The exemptions listed in Footnote No. 1 do not apply to the provisions of the law related to child passenger protection.

<sup>4</sup>**Exceptions.** However, the front seat may be used to transport such a child "if there is no back seat and the required seat belt or child restraint is utilized by other children and the required seat belt or child restraint system is utilized in the front seat." §31-22-22(a)

**RHODE ISLAND**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

to a fine of **\$150**<sup>5</sup>. However, such a violation shall not be recorded on the person's driving record. §31-22-22(c)

II. A person, who violates the requirement in III above, is subject to the following fines. 1st offense-A fine of **\$30**.<sup>5</sup> 2nd offense-A fine of **\$60**.<sup>5</sup> Subsequent offense-A fine of **\$100**.<sup>5</sup> However, such a violation shall not be recorded on the person's driving record.<sup>2</sup> §31-22-22(d)

Note: Under the provisions concerning the administrative adjudication of traffic offenses, for a first violation of either I, II or III there is a fine of **\$30**.<sup>5</sup> For subsequent offenses, the fine may be increased or the violator may be required to perform community service. §31-41-4

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of these requirements shall not be considered as contributory or comparative negligence and such a violation is not admissible as evidence in the trial of any civil action. §31-22-22(b) (12)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

I. When operating a motorcycle, motor scooter or a motor driven cycle, a person <21 years old shall wear a State approved helmet. §31-10.1-4

II. When operating a motorcycle, motor scooter or a motor driven cycle, any person (regardless of age), who has not been licensed for more than 1 year to operate such vehicles, shall wear a State approved helmet. §31-10.1-4

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

A fine of **\$35**.<sup>5</sup> §31-10.1-4 Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

When operating a motorcycle, motor scooter or a motor driven cycle, a person (regardless of age) shall wear a State approved eye protection device. §31-10.1-4

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

A fine of **\$35**.<sup>5</sup> §31-10.1-4 Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

A person ≤8 years old shall wear a nationally approved helmet when riding a bicycle. §31-19-2.1 A parent or guardian of any child shall not authorize or knowingly permit such child or ward to violate this requirement. §31-19-2

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<sup>5</sup>EMS Special Assessment. In addition to any fine, an offender must be assessed **\$1**. §31-27-18 Note: These funds are deposited into the general State fund and, therefore, do not appear to be obligated for EMS functions.

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

A violation of this requirement must be adjudicated administratively. §31-19-1 Note: Neither the provisions of the administrative adjudication law, §31-41-4, nor the above cited provisions provide for a fine sanction. The law appears to be unclear but such an offense may be considered a misdemeanor under the general penalty provision of vehicle code with the exception that, since the offense is being treated administratively, only a fine sanction can be imposed. The fine sanction for such a misdemeanor is not more than \$500.<sup>5</sup> §31-27-13(a) & (b)

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

Note: Given the above requirements concerning safety belt usage, it appears to be a violation such requirements to allow a person to ride in the bed of a pickup truck unless they are secured by such a belt.

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

SOUTH CAROLINA  
Code of Laws of South Carolina Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

I. When operating a motor vehicle<sup>1</sup>, the driver and every occupant shall wear a safety belt. §56-5-6520

II. When operating a motor vehicle<sup>1</sup>, the driver shall require that every passenger >6 but <17 years old wear a safety belt. §56-5-6520

**Secondary Enforcement.** A law enforcement officer may not stop a driver for a violation of these requirements in the absence of another violation of the motor vehicle laws. However, such enforcement is possible via stops made at checkpoints established for the purpose of determining proper driver's licenses or vehicle registrations. A citation for a violation of these requirements cannot be issued unless a citation is also issued for the offense that caused the initial stop. §56-5-6540(B)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

A fine of not more than \$10. There are no court costs for this offense. In addition, a person cannot be fined more than \$20 for any one incident where more than one violation occurred. §56-5-6540(A) No points may be assessed against a person's driving record for a violation of these requirements. §65-5-6550

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of these requirements does not constitute negligence per se or contributory negligence and is not admissible as evidence in a civil action. §56-5-6540(C)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>2</sup>:

Requirements:

I. A person, when transporting a child <1 year old in a motor vehicle<sup>3</sup>, must secure such child in a Federally approved child restraint system. §56-5-6410(1)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to wear a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons who cannot use a safety belt because of physical or medical reasons; (2) to medical or rescue personnel attending to injured or sick individuals in an emergency vehicle; (3) to persons riding in school, church or day care buses; (4) to persons riding in public transportation vehicles except taxis; (5) to persons riding in vehicles in a parade; (6) to United States mail carriers; (7) to persons where a safety belt is not available because all seating positions with safety belts are already occupied; (8) to drivers who make frequent stops for pick up or delivery purposes; and, (9) to persons occupying the rear seat of a motor vehicle unless the vehicle is equipped with a shoulder harness in addition to the lap belt. §56-5-6530 Note: The passenger protection law does not provide a special definition for the term "motor vehicle."

<sup>2</sup>**Exemptions.** These requirements do not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To children when all of the available seating positions with restraining devices are already occupied but priority must be given to children <6 years old according to their ages (§56-5-6420); to children who are being fed or who have physical impairment or medical problems that makes use of a child restraint system impractical (§56-5-6430); (3) to children riding in taxi cabs, emergency vehicles when in official operation or vehicles operated by churches or day care centers (§56-5-6440); and, (4) to children riding in a school bus, public/commercial transportation vehicle (§56-5-6440).

<sup>3</sup>The term "motor vehicle" refers to a passenger car, pickup truck, van or recreational vehicle. §56-5-6410

SOUTH CAROLINA

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Requirements: (continued)

II. A person, when transporting a child <4 years old in the front seat of a motor vehicle, must secure such child in a Federally approved child restraint system. §56-5-6410(2)

III. A person, when transporting a child ≥4 but <6 years old in the front seat of a motor vehicle, must secure such child in a safety belt. §56-5-6410(3)

IV. A person, when transporting a child ≥1 but <6 years old in the rear seat of a motor vehicle, must secure such child in either a Federally approved child restraint system or a safety belt. §56-5-6410(4)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

A fine of not more than \$25. §56-5-6450 Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of these requirements.

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of these requirements shall not constitute negligence per se or contributory negligence and shall not be admissible as evidence in any civil action. §56-5-6460

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

When operating or riding on a two-wheeled motorized vehicle (motorcycle), a person <21 years old shall wear a State approved helmet. §56-5-3660

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: An imprisonment term of not more than 30 days and/or a fine of not more than \$100. §56-5-3700 Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

When operating or riding on a two-wheeled motorized vehicle (motorcycle), a person <21 years old shall wear State approved goggles or face shield. §56-5-3670 This requirement does not apply if the vehicle is equipped with a wind screen. §56-5-3680

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: An imprisonment term of not more than 30 days and/or a fine of not more than \$100. §56-5-3700 Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

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<sup>4</sup>For persons ≥21 years old, the failure to wear a helmet is not considered contributory negligence in a civil action. *Mayer v. Paxton*, 437 S.E.2d 66 (S.C. 1993)

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements: **None**  
Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements: **None**  
Sanctions for a Violation:  
Exemptions:



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

**SOUTH DAKOTA**  
South Dakota Codified Laws

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. When a passenger vehicle<sup>2</sup> is in operation, the driver and all front seat passengers shall wear safety seat belts. §32-38-1
  - II. The driver of a passenger vehicle<sup>2</sup> shall secure front seat passengers  $\geq 5$  but  $< 18$  years old in a safety seat belt. §32-38-1
- Secondary Enforcement.** Enforcement of these requirements by law enforcement officers shall be accomplished as a secondary action. §32-38-5

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Petty Offense: A "judgment" of \$20. §§23-1A-22 & 32-38-5 A violation of these requirements is not a moving violation. §32-38-1

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of these requirements does not constitute contributory negligence, comparative negligence or assumption of the risk. And, except for criminal litigation for violations of these requirements, evidence of such violations may not be introduced as evidence in any civil litigation on the issue of injuries or on the issue of mitigation of damages. §32-38-4

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>3</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. A driver, when transporting a child  $< 2$  years old in a passenger vehicle<sup>4</sup>, shall secure such child in a Federally approved child passenger restraint system. §32-37-1
- II. A driver, when transporting a child  $\geq 2$  but  $< 5$  years old in a passenger vehicle<sup>4</sup>, shall secure such child in either a Federally approved child passenger restraint system or a seat belt. §32-37-1

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to wear a safety seat belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons riding in a passenger vehicle manufactured before September 1, 1973; (2) to persons who for medical reasons are unable to wear a safety seat belt; (3) to persons who are riding in a vehicle that does not have to be equipped with safety seat belts under Federal law; (4) to rural carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while on official duties; and, (5) to persons delivering newspapers or periodicals on an assigned home delivery route. §32-38-3

<sup>2</sup>The term "passenger vehicle" means any self-propelled vehicle intended primary for highway use and includes passenger cars, station wagons, vans, taxicabs, emergency vehicles, motor homes, trucks and pickup trucks. This term does not include motorcycles, motor scooters, motor bicycles, motorized bicycles, passenger buses and school buses. §32-38-2

<sup>3</sup>**Exemptions.** These requirements do not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To children who are being transported by drivers licensed in another State; (2) to children when their personal needs are being cared for; (3) to children when all of the available seating positions with child passenger restraint systems or seat belts are occupied; and, (4) to children who are riding in passenger cars manufactured before 1966 that have not been equipped with seat belts. §32-37-2

<sup>4</sup>Note: The term "passenger vehicle" is not defined in the child passenger protection law.

**SOUTH DAKOTA**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Petty Offense: A "judgment" of **\$20**. §§23-1A-22 & 32-37-1 Note:  
The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of these  
requirements.

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of these requirements is not considered as contributory  
negligence, comparative negligence or assumption of the risk and is not  
admissible as evidence in the trial of any civil action. §32-37-4

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear<sup>5</sup>:

Requirements:

I. A person < 18 years old may not operate or ride on a motorcycle  
unless they are wearing a Federally approved protective helmet. §32-  
20-4

II. A motorcycle operator (regardless of age) shall not allow a  
passenger < 18 years old to ride a motorcycle unless such passenger is  
wearing a Federally approved protective helmet. §32-20-4

Note: These requirements do not apply to persons who are riding  
within an enclosed cab. §32-20-4.2

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Class 2 Misdemeanor: An imprisonment term of not more than **30 days**  
and/or a fine of not more than **\$200**. §§22-6-2(2) & 32-20-4 Note:  
The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of these  
requirements.

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

A person shall not operate a motorcycle unless either (1) they are  
wearing an eye protection device or (2) such vehicle is equipped with  
a windscreen. §32-20-4.1

Note: This requirement does not apply to persons who are riding  
within an enclosed cab. §32-20-4.2

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Petty Offense: A "judgment" of **\$20**. §§23-1A-22 & 32-20-4.1 Note:  
The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this  
requirement.

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

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<sup>5</sup>Failure to wear a helmet may be introduced into evidence at a civil action in order to mitigate damages. *Robbins v. Buntrock*, 550 N.W.2d 422 (S.D. 1996)

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements: **None**

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

TENNESSEE  
Tennessee Code Annotated and Rules and Regulations of the State of  
Tennessee (RRST)

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

A person shall not drive a passenger motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> unless they and all front seat passengers  $\geq 4$  years old are restrained by a safety belt. §55-9-603(a)(1), (a)(2), (b)(1) Note: For passenger  $\geq 4$  but  $< 12$  years old, see Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems below.

**Secondary Enforcement.** No citation or warrant for an arrest shall be issued for a violation of this requirement unless the person who has been stopped by a law enforcement officer and has been issued a citation or arrest warrant for a separate violation of the law.<sup>3</sup> §55-9-603(f)(1)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Class C Misdemeanor: An imprisonment term of not more than 30 days and/or a fine of not more than \$50. §§40-35-111(e)(3) & 55-9-603(d)(1)

**Alternative.** In lieu of a court appearance, an offender may for a 1st offense pay a fine of \$10 and for a 2nd or subsequent offense pay a fine of \$20. §55-9-603(d)(2)

**Important.** A driver cannot be fined for a violation of this requirement for the failure of a passenger  $> 16$  years old to wear a safety belt. §55-9-606

Note: Neither court costs nor a litigation tax shall be imposed. §55-9-603(e) In addition, no points can be assigned to an offender's driving record for a violation of this requirement. §55-9-603(g)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Generally, a violation of this requirement is not admissible into evidence in a civil action. §55-9-604

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to wear a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons who cannot wear a safety belt because of a physical disability; (2) a rural letter carrier of the U.S. Postal Service while performing official duties; (3) automobile dealership salespersons or mechanics who test drive 50 or more vehicles a day and where test drives are within 1 mile of the dealership; (4) utility workers while performing official duties; (5) water, gas and electric meter readers in the course of their employment; and, (5) persons who are in the process of delivering newspapers. §55-9-603(h)

<sup>2</sup>The term "passenger motor vehicle" means a vehicle having a gross vehicle weight  $\leq 8,500$  lbs. and which is not used as a public livery conveyance for passengers. In addition, such term does not include a motor vehicle that does not have to be equipped with safety belts under Federal law. §55-9-603(c)

<sup>3</sup>A law enforcement officer observing a violation of this requirement shall only issue a citation for such violation. A law enforcement officer cannot take a person into custody solely for such a violation. §55-9-603(f)(2)

TENNESSEE

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. A person, when transporting a child <4 years old in a motor vehicle<sup>5</sup>, shall secure such child in a Federally approved child passenger restraint system. §55-9-602(a)
- II. A person, when transporting a child ≥4 but <12 years old in a motor vehicle<sup>5</sup>, shall either secure such child in a Federally approved child passenger restraint system or in a safety belt. §55-9-602(g)(1)

Sanctions for Failure to Require the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Class C Misdemeanor: An imprisonment term of not more than 30 days and/or a fine of not more than \$50. §§40-35-111(e)(3) & 55-9-602(c)(1) & (g)(2)

**Alternatives.** I. For violation of I above, in addition to or in lieu of the above sanctions, an offender may be required to attend a class on the hazards of not transporting children properly. §55-9-602(c)(2)

II. For a violation of II above, in lieu of a court appearance, an offender may for a 1st offense pay a fine of \$10 and for a 2nd or subsequent offense pay a fine of \$20. Also, no court costs or litigation tax may be assessed against an offender. §55-9-602(g)(3) & (4) III.

Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of these requirements.

Effect on Civil Liability:

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

A person who operates or rides as a passenger on a motorcycle or motorized bicycle must wear a State approved crash helmet. §55-9-302(a) This requirement does not apply to persons riding in an enclosed cab. §55-9-302(b)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Class C Misdemeanor: An imprisonment term of not more than 30 days and/or a fine of not more than \$50. §§40-35-111(e)(3) & 55-9-306 Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

A person who operates or rides as a passenger on a motor-driven cycle or motorized bicycle shall wear either safety goggles, face shields or glasses containing impact resistant lenses. This requirement does not apply if the vehicle is equipped with a windshield. §55-9-304

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<sup>4</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a child passenger restraint system does not apply if the mother either (1) is nursing the child or (2) is attending to its other physiological needs. §55-9-602(b) In addition, the requirement to use either a child passenger restraint system or safety belt for children ≥4 but <12 years old does not apply if all seat belts or other passenger restraints are already occupied. §55-9-602(g)(5)

<sup>5</sup>Note: The term "motor vehicle" does not have a special definition in the child passenger protection law.

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Class C Misdemeanor: An imprisonment term of not more than 30 days and/or a fine of not more than \$50. §§40-35-111(e)(3) & 55-9-306 Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear<sup>6</sup>:

Requirements:

I. A person < 12 years old cannot operate or be a passenger on a bicycle unless they are wearing a protective cycle helmet. §55-52-105(1)  
II. It is an offense for either a parent or legal guardian knowingly permit their child to violate the above requirement.

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Violation: An adult who violates the above requirement is guilty of a violation and is liable for a fine \$2 plus court costs. §55-52-106(a)  
Note: A violation of this requirement is not admissible as evidence in any civil action. §55-52-106(c)

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

A person shall not transport a child < 6 years old in the bed of a truck with a manufacturer's ton rating not exceeding three-quarter (3/4) ton and having a pickup body style. §55-8-189(a)

Sanctions for a Violation:

Class C Misdemeanor: An imprisonment term of not more than 30 days and/or a fine of not more than \$50. §§40-35-111(e)(3) & 55-8-189(b) Note: The law is not specific as to whether points can be assigned for a violation of this requirement. However, since this offense is codified under the rules of the road provisions of the vehicle code, an offender may be subject to a 3 point assessment against their driving record under the miscellaneous point assessment provisions of the point system regulations. RRST Ch. 1340-1-40.03

Exemptions:

This requirement does not apply if the child is being transported in the bed of such a vehicle as part of an organized parade, possession or other ceremonial event or for agricultural purposes and when the vehicle is not traveling > 20 MPH. §55-8-189(c)

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<sup>6</sup>A person either who weighs < 40 lbs. or who is < 40 inches tall must be secured in a restraining seat when being transported on a bicycle. §55-52-105(2) Note: The sanctions for a violation of this requirement are the same as for a failure to use a bicycle safety helmet.



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

TEXAS  
Vernon's Texas Transportation Code (Tran. Code)

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. When a passenger car<sup>2</sup> is being operated, anyone  $\geq 15$  years old, who is riding in the front seat must wear a safety belt. Tran. Code §545.413(a)
- II. A person cannot operate a passenger car<sup>2</sup> unless front seat passengers, who are  $\geq 4$  but  $< 15$  years old, are secured in a safety belt. §Tran. Code §545.413(b)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Misdemeanor: A fine of not less than \$25 nor more than \$50.<sup>3</sup> Tran. Code §545.413(d)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Evidence of nonuse of a safety belt is not admissible in a civil trial. Tran. Code §545.413(g)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. A person cannot operate a passenger car<sup>5</sup> or light truck, when transporting a child  $< 2$  years old, unless such child is secured in a Federally approved child passenger safety seat system. Tran. Code §545.412(a)(1) & (f)
- II. A person cannot operate a passenger car<sup>5</sup> or light truck while transporting a child  $\geq 2$  but  $< 4$  years old unless such child is secured either in a Federally approved child passenger safety seat system or by a safety belt. Tran. Code §545.412(a)(2)(A) & (B) and (f)

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<sup>1</sup>Exemptions. The requirements to use a safety belt do not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To person who are unable to use a safety belt for physical of medical reasons; (2) to persons employed by the U.S. Postal Service while performing official duties; and, (3) to persons who are in the process of delivering newspapers from a vehicle. Tran. Code §545.413(e) & §127 of Ch. 751 of the Acts of 1995)

<sup>2</sup>For the purposes of the passenger protection law, the term "passenger car" also includes a truck with a manufacturer's rated carrying capacity of not more than 1,500 lbs. Tran. Code §545.413(h) Generally, the term "passenger car" means a motor vehicle, other than a motorcycle used to transport persons and designed to accommodate  $\leq 10$  passengers. Tran. Code §541.201(12)

<sup>3</sup>The law is not specific as to whether there is a licensing sanction of this offense. However, it may be possible for the State to either suspend or revoke a person's driving privileges based on habitual violations of the traffic law which could include this offense. Tran. Code §521.294

<sup>4</sup>Exemptions. These requirements do not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To children who are being transported in emergency or law enforcement vehicles; (2) to children being transported in passenger for hire vehicles; and, (3) to children being transported in a vehicle in which all seating position equipped with child passenger safety seat systems or safety belts are occupied. Tran. Code §545.412(c) & (e)

<sup>5</sup>The term "passenger car" means a motor vehicle, other than a motorcycle used to transport persons and designed to accommodate  $\leq 10$  passengers. Tran. Code §541.201(12)

**TEXAS**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Misdemeanor: A fine of not less than \$25 nor more than \$50.<sup>3</sup> Tran.  
Code §545.412(b)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Evidence of non use of a child passenger safety seat system is not  
admissible in a civil trial.<sup>6</sup> Tran. Code §545.412(d)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

A person, who operates or rides as a passenger on a motorcycle<sup>7</sup>, shall  
wear State approved protective headgear. Tran. Code §661.003(a) &  
(c)

**Exception.** A person, who is ≥21 years old, may apply for an  
"exception" from this requirement provided they either (1) have  
successfully completed a motorcycle operator training and safety course  
or (2) are covered by a health insurance plan that provides the person  
with at least \$10,000 in medical benefits which will cover the costs of  
any injury sustained while operating or riding on a motorcycle.<sup>8</sup> Tran.  
Code §661.003(c)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: A fine of not less than \$10 nor more than \$50.<sup>3</sup> Tran.  
Code §661.003(h)

Note: In a Federal case, the court held that there may be a common  
law duty under Texas law to wear protective headgear. *Kennon v.*  
*Slipstreamer, Inc.*, 794 F.2d 1067 (5th Cir. 1986)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

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<sup>6</sup>However, evidence of non use can be used in certain proceeding under the Family Code. §126, Ch. 751, Acts of 1995

<sup>7</sup>The term "motorcycle" means a self propelled motor vehicle with not more than 3 wheels and which may have a saddle for rider use. The term does not include a tractor or three-wheeled vehicle that is equipped with a cab, seat and seat belt and is designed to contain the cab operator. Tran. Code §661.001(1)

<sup>8</sup>Motorcycle owners, who qualify for this exception, may apply to the State Department of Public Health for a special license plate sticker which indicates they satisfy the requirements for such an exception. In addition, the law presumes that either operators or passengers, who are riding on motorcycles displaying such stickers, have complied with these requirements. Tran. Code §661.003(d) & (g)

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements: **None**

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements: When operating either an open-bed pickup truck or an open flatbed truck or when drawing an open flatbed trailer at a speed >35 MPH, a driver shall not transport a passenger < 12 years old in the bed of such truck or trailer. Tran. Code §545.414(a)

Sanctions for a Violation: Misdemeanor: A fine of not less than \$25 nor more than \$200.<sup>3</sup> Tran. Code §545.414(b)

Exemptions: This requirement does not apply if the person < 12 years old was being transported in the bed of such vehicles due to an emergency. §Tran. Code §545.414(c)



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

UTAH  
Utah Code Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. When a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> is in operation, the driver and all front seat passengers shall wear a safety belt. §41-6-182(2)
- II. When a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> is in operation, the driver shall secure all front seat passengers < 18 years old (except as noted below under Child Safety Restraint Systems) in a safety belt. §41-6-182(3)  
**Secondary Enforcement.** Law enforcement officers shall only enforce these requirements as a secondary action when the driver of a motor vehicle has been detained for a suspected violation of the motor vehicle laws or for another offense. §41-6-184

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

A fine of \$10. §41-6-185(1) No points may be assessed against any person for a violation of these requirements. §41-6-185(2)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to wear a safety belt does not constitute contributory or comparative negligence. Evidence of such a failure may not be introduced as evidence in any civil litigation on the issues of injuries or on the mitigation of damages. §41-6-186

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>3</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. A person, when transporting a child <2 years old in a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup>, shall secure such child in a State approved child restraint device. §41-6-148.20(2)(a)
- II. A person, when transporting a child ≥2 but <10 years old in a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup>, shall secure such child either in a State approved child restraint device or in a safety belt. §41-6-148.20(2)(b)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Infraction: A fine of not more than \$75. §41-6-148.20(4)(a) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of these requirements.

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons driving or riding in motor vehicles manufactured before July 1, 1966; (2) to persons who for physical or medical reasons are unable to wear a safety belt; (3) to rural letter carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while performing official duties; and, (4) to persons engaged in pick up, delivery or service operations involving repeated starts and stops and requiring the front seat occupant to frequently and repeatedly enter and leave the vehicle. §41-6-183

<sup>2</sup>The term "motor vehicle" does not include emergency vehicles, mopeds, campers, sleepers, motorcycles, motor homes, school buses, taxicabs, public transit vehicles or vehicles weighing > 10,000 lbs. and that are not required to be equipped with safety belts. §§41-6-148.20(1)(a) & 41-6-182(1)

<sup>3</sup>The requirement to use either a child restraint device or safety seat does not apply if all seating position are occupied by other passengers. §41-6-148.20(3)

**UTAH**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to comply with these requirements may not be considered comparative negligence. In addition, evidence of such failure is not admissible in the trial of a civil action with regard to negligence. §41-6-148.20(5)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

I. A person < 18 years old may not operate or ride on a motorcycle or motor-driven cycle on a highway unless they wear State approved protective headgear. §41-6-107.8(1) This requirement does not apply if the operator or rider is within an enclosed cab. §41-6-107.8(2)  
II. For off-highway vehicles, a person < 18 years old<sup>4</sup>, who is operating or riding on either a motorcycle, snowmobile, or a Type I all-terrain vehicle, shall wear a protective headgear.<sup>5</sup> §41-22-10.8(1)(b)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

I. A violation of I above is an Infraction with a fine of not more than \$750. §§41-6-12(2), 76-3-205 & 76-3-301(1)(e)  
II. A violation of II above is an Infraction with a fine sanction of not more than \$50. §41-22-10.8(3)  
Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of these requirements.

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

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<sup>4</sup>The requirement to wear protective headgear also applies to operators or riders regardless of age who are participating in competitive events on lands or highways designated as open for off-highway vehicle use. §41-22-10.8(1)(a)

<sup>5</sup>The requirement to wear protective headgear does not apply to operators or passengers of off-highway implements of husbandry when operated according to §41-22-5.5(3) to (5). §41-22-10.8(2)

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

- I. No person shall ride upon any portion of any vehicle that is not designed or intended for passenger use. §41-6-108
- II. No driver shall knowingly allow a person to ride upon any portion of any vehicle that is not designed or intended for passenger use. §41-6-108

Sanctions for a Violation:

Infraction: A fine of not more than \$750. §§41-6-12(2), 76-3-205 & 76-3-301(1)(e) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of these requirements.

Exemptions:

This prohibition does not apply either (1) if the vehicle is not being driven upon a highway, (2) if employees riding upon a vehicle are engaged in the necessary discharge of their duties or (3) if persons are riding in a vehicle space that is intended for any load. §41-6-108



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

VERMONT  
Vermont Statutes Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

A person shall not operate a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> unless all persons (including the operator), who are occupying a seating position with safety belts, are wearing such belts. Title 23, §1259(a) See Required Use of Child Safety Restraints below.

**Secondary Enforcement.** A law enforcement officer can only enforce this requirement if a vehicle operator has been detained for another traffic law violation. An offender is not subject to a fine for a violation of this requirement unless they are also fined for the primary traffic law offense. Title 23, §1259(f)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

A vehicle operator is subject to a fine of \$10. Title 23, §1259(a) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Effect on Civil Liability:

A failure to comply with this requirement is not admissible as evidence in any civil proceeding. Title 23, §1259(d) A failure to comply with this requirement does not constitute negligence or contributory negligence in any civil proceeding or criminal action. However, such a failure is not a bar to the prosecution of a criminal offense. Title 23, §1259(e)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>3</sup>:

Requirements:

I. A person, when transporting a child <5 years old in a motor vehicle (except a Type I school bus), shall secure such child in a Federally approved child restraint system. Title 23, §1258(a)

II. A person, when transporting a child ≥5 but <13 years old in a motor vehicle (except a school bus), shall secure such child in a safety belt. Title 23, §1258(b)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to wear a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons who have a physical condition that would make the wearing of a safety belt inappropriate; (2) to rural mail carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while performing official duties; (3) to persons who are making frequent stops for the purpose of delivering property and where the vehicle is operating ≤15 MPH; (4) to persons performing official duties in an emergency vehicle; (5) to persons operating any implements of husbandry; and, (6) to persons occupying either a bus or a taxi. Title 23, §1259(b)

<sup>2</sup>The requirement of use a safety belt only applies to persons who are occupying a seating position which has been manufactured with a Federally approved safety belt system. Title 23, §1259(a) Note: Indirectly, the safety belt use law only applies to motor vehicles that are required to have safety belts under Federal law.

<sup>3</sup>**Exemptions.** These requirements do not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To children being transported as passengers for hire (except motor vehicles owned by day care facilities); (2) to children who are riding in motor vehicles that were not manufactured with safety belts; (3) to children who have a physical condition that prevents the use of either a child passenger restraint system or a safety belt; (4) to children, where the total number of safety belts available are in use, provided that children <5 years old are secured in a child passenger restraint system and all safety belts are in use. Title 23, §1258(c)

**VERMONT**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

A fine of not more than \$25. Title 23, §1258(d) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of these requirements.

Effect on Civil Liability:

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

No person shall operate or ride on a motorcycle unless they wear State approved protective headgear. Title 23, §1256

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Traffic Violation: A fine of not more than \$175. Title 23, §2302(a), (d) & (c) In addition, two (2) points are assessed against a person's driving record for a violation of this requirement. Title 23, §2502(a)(BBB)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

If a motorcycle is not equipped with a windshield or screen, the operator shall wear either eye glasses, goggles or a face shield. Title 23, §1257

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Traffic Violation: A fine of not more than \$175. Title 23, §2302(a), (d) & (c) In addition, two (2) points are assessed against a person's driving record for a violation of this requirement. Title 23, §2502(a)(CCC)

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

VIRGINIA  
Code of Virginia Annotated and Virginia Administrative Code (VAC)

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

When a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> is in motion, each person  $\geq 16$  years old, who is occupying the front seat, shall wear a safety belt.<sup>3</sup> §46.2-1094(A)

**Secondary Enforcement.** No citation for a violation of this requirement shall be issued unless a law enforcement officer has cause to stop or arrest the driver for a violation of the State's law or a local ordinance related to motor vehicles. §46.2-1094(F)

Note: City governments with a population  $> 66,000$  but  $\leq 67,000$ , have the authority to enact ordinances requiring safety belt usage which are not inconsistent with State law. The sanction for a violation of such an ordinance cannot exceed \$25. §46.2-1094(G)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Civil Penalty: A penalty of \$25 and no court costs. No points may be assigned to a person's driving record. §46.2-1094(C)

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of these requirements (1) shall not constitute negligence, (2) shall not be considered in the mitigation of damages of whatever nature or (3) shall neither be admitted into evidence nor commented upon by counsel in a civil action. §46.2-1094(D)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

I. A person, when transporting a child  $< 4$  years old in a motor

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons who have a physical or medical condition that makes wearing a safety belt impractical; (2) to law enforcement officers who are transporting a person in custody where the wearing of a safety belt would be impractical; (3) to rural mail carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while performing official duties; (4) to persons performing the duties of a rural newspaper route carrier, newspaper bundle hauler or newspaper rack carrier; (5) to taxicab drivers; (6) to persons required to make frequent stops while operating commercial or public vehicles; (7) to utility meter readers; and, (8) to law enforcement personnel who are enforcing motor vehicle parking laws. §46.2-1094(B)

<sup>2</sup>Generally, the safety belt use requirement applies to persons occupying "passenger cars" that are equipped with or required by law to be equipped with safety belts. §§46.2-1092 & 46.2-1094(A) & (B) The term "passenger car" means every motor vehicle other than a motorcycle designed and used primarily for the transporting of no more than 10 persons including the driver. §46.2-100

<sup>3</sup>**School Bus.** A person must wear a safety belt when operating a school bus. A violation of this requirement is a Class 3 Misdemeanor. §46.2-1091 The sanction for a Class 3 Misdemeanor is a fine of not more than \$500. §18.2-11(c) In addition, a school bus operator, who violates this requirement, has 3 points assessed against their driving record. §46.2-492 and 24 VAC 20-30-60

<sup>4</sup>**Exemptions.** There are several provisions of the child restraint law that provided for exemptions. I. Under §46.2-1095(F), such requirements do not apply to taxicabs, school buses, executive sedans, limousines or the rear cargo area of pickup trucks or other vehicles. III. Under §46.2-1099, these requirements do not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To children who are being transported in a vehicle having an interior design which makes the use of a child restraint device impractical; and, (2) to children being transported by public transportation, bus, school bus or farm vehicle. III. And, under §46.2-1096, these requirements do not apply to children who for weight, physical unfitness or other medical reasons cannot practically use a child restraint system.

VIRGINIA

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Requirements: (continued)

vehicle<sup>5</sup>, must secure such a child in a Federally approved child restraint device. §46.2-1095(A)

II. As an alternative to using a child restraint device, a person, when transporting a child between 3 and 4 years old, may secure such child in a seat belt. The size and weight of the child must make the use of a seat belt practical and the use of a child restraint device impractical. §46.2-1100

III. A person, when transporting a child  $\geq 4$  but  $< 16$  years old, shall ensure that such child is secured in a safety belt. §46.2-1095(B)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

I. For violations of I or II above a Civil Penalty of \$50. §46.2-1098 (¶1) Note: The law is not specific but 3 points may be assessed against a person's driving record for a violation of these requirements. §46.2-492 and 24 VAC 20-30-60

II. For a violation of III above a Civil Penalty of \$25 with no court costs. No points shall be assessed for a violation of this requirement. §46.2-1095(D)

Effect on Civil Liability:

I. A violation of these requirements shall not constitute negligence per se. Such violations shall not constitute a defense for personal injuries to a child for injuries sustained in a motor vehicle accident. §46.2-1098 (¶2)

II. Under separate provisions of law, a violation of these requirements is likewise not considered to be negligence per se. In addition, a violation is not to be considered in mitigation of damages, admitted into evidence or commented upon by counsel in any civil action. §46.2-1095(C)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear<sup>6</sup>:

Requirements:

When operating or riding on a motorcycle<sup>7</sup>, a person shall wear a State approved protective helmet. §46.2-910(A)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Traffic Infraction: A fine of not more than \$200. §46.2-113 Note: The law is not specific but 3 points may be assessed against a person's driving record for a violation of these requirements. §46.2-492 and 24 VAC 20-30-60

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<sup>5</sup>This requirement only applies to motor vehicles manufactured after January 1, 1968. §46.2-1095 Note: The child passenger protection law is not clear but it appears to apply only to vehicles that are required by law to be manufactured with a safety belts.

<sup>6</sup>The requirement to wear a protective helmet does not apply to operators or passengers of (1) motorcycles with wheels of  $\leq 8$  inches in diameter or (2) three-wheeled motorcycles which have nonremovable roofs, windshields and enclosed bodies. §46.2-910(A)

<sup>7</sup>The term "motorcycle" does not include a moped. However, the term "moped" is defined to include a motorcycle with an engine displacement of  $\leq 50$  cubic inches and a maximum speed of  $< 30$  MPH. §46.2-100

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Use: (continued)

Failure to wear a protective helmet shall not constitute negligence per se in any civil proceeding. §46.2-910(A)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

When operating a motorcycle<sup>7</sup>, a person shall wear a State approved face shield, safety glasses or goggles. This requirement does not apply if the motorcycle is equipped with windshield. §46.2-910(A)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Traffic Infraction: A fine of not more than \$200. §46.2-113 Note: The law is not specific but 3 points may be assessed against a person's driving record for a violation of these requirements. §46.2-492 and 24 VAC 20-30-60  
Note: Failure to wear a face shield, safety glasses or goggles shall not constitute negligence per se in any civil proceeding. §46.2-910(A)

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

A county, city or town may enact an ordinance providing that every person ≤ 14 years old shall wear a nationally approved protective helmet when riding or being carried on a bicycle. §46.2-906.1 (¶1)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

A violation of such an ordinance is punishable by a fine of \$25. §46.2-906.1 (¶2)  
Note: A violation of this requirements (1) shall not constitute negligence, (2) shall not constitute assumption of risk, (3) shall not be considered in the mitigation of damages of whatever nature and (4) shall neither be admitted into evidence nor commented upon by counsel in a civil action. §46.2-906.1 (¶3)

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

VIRGIN ISLANDS  
Virgin Islands Code

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

A person shall not operate a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> unless they and all front seat passengers are secured by a safety belt. Title 20, §466(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Misdemeanor: 1st offense-A fine of not less than \$25 nor more than \$100. 2nd offense-A fine of not less than \$50 nor more than \$200. 3rd or subsequent offense (within 3 years)-A fine of not less than \$100 nor more than \$500 and driving privileges may be suspended for not more than 1 year. Title 14, §§1 & 2(b)(2) and Title 20, §466(c)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>3</sup>:

Requirements:

Before operating a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup>, a person shall secure a child <5 years old in a Federally approved child safety seat. As an alternative, children 3 through 5 years old may be secured by a safety belt. Title 20, §466(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Misdemeanor: 1st offense-A fine of not less than \$25 nor more than \$100. 2nd offense-A fine of not less than \$50 nor more than \$200. 3rd or subsequent offense (within 3 years)-A fine of not less than \$100 nor more than \$500 and driving privileges may be suspended for not more than 1 year. Title 14, §§1 & 2(b)(2) and Title 20, §466(c)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

A person, when operating or riding on a motorcycle<sup>4</sup>, shall wear a Territory approved protective helmet. Title 20, §465(e)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemption.** The requirement to wear a safety belt does not apply to persons who have a physical disability that would prevent appropriate use of this device. Title 20, §466(d)

<sup>2</sup>The term "motor vehicle" includes all motor vehicles except those manufactured before January 1, 1978, buses, authorized emergency vehicles and trucks with a maximum gross weight  $\geq 18,000$  lbs. Title 20, §466(b)

<sup>3</sup>**Exemption.** The requirement to secure a child either in a child safety seat or safety belt does not apply to children who have a physical disability that would prevent appropriate use of such safety seat or safety belt. In addition, this requirement does not apply to operators of automobiles for hire when such vehicles are being operated within designated city limits. Title 20, §466(d)

<sup>4</sup>The term "motorcycle" means a motor vehicle, including motor scooters and mopeds, having a seat or saddle for the use of the rider and having not more than three wheels. However, the term does not include tractors. Title 20, §465(a)

**VIRGIN ISLANDS**

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: An imprisonment term of not more than **6 months** and/or a fine of not more than **\$200.**<sup>5</sup> Title 14, §§1 & 2(b)(2) and Title 20, §544(f)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

**None**

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

**None**

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

**None**

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

**None**

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:

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<sup>5</sup>The law is not specific but the court appears to have the authority to revoke a person's license for this offense. A person, who has been convicted of a traffic offense, may be subject to court imposed licensing action. The license revocation period is at the discretion of the court. Title 20, §546

JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

WASHINGTON  
Revised Code of Washington Annotated and Washington Administrative Code (WAC)

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

I. A person  $\geq$  16 years old, who is either operating or riding in a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup>, shall wear a safety belt. §46.61.688(3)  
II. No person shall operate a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup> unless all passengers  $<$  16 years old are wearing a safety belt. §46.61.688(4)  
**Secondary Enforcement.** Enforcement of these requirements may only be accomplished as a secondary action when a driver has been detained for a suspected violation of State or local motor vehicle laws or some other offense. §46.61.688(7)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Traffic Infraction: Not more than \$250.<sup>3</sup> §§46.61.688(5) & 46.63-110(1) Note: A violation of these requirements shall be recorded on a driver's record. However, such information shall not be available to insurance companies or employers. §46.61.688(5)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to comply with these requirements does not constitute negligence. In addition, failure to wear a safety belt cannot be admitted into evidence as negligence in any civil action. §46.61.688(6) & *Patterson v. Horton*, 929 P.2d 1125 (Wash.App. 2 Div. 1997)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to wear a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons, who are operating or riding in motor vehicles that are not required to be equipped with safety belts under Federal law; (2) to persons, for whom no safety belts are available, when all designated seating positions are occupied; (3) to persons, who for physical or medical reasons, are unable to wear a safety belt; and, (4) to persons, who the State has exempted via regulation and who are operators or occupants of farm vehicles, construction equipment and vehicles that are required to make frequent stops. §46.61.688(2), (8) & (9)

<sup>2</sup>The term "motor vehicle" means either (1) a bus designed to carry  $>$  10 persons, (2) a multipurpose passenger vehicle designed to carry  $\leq$  10 persons, (3) a passenger car and (4) a truck. However, the term does not include either (1) motorcycles or (2) trailers designed to carry  $\leq$  10 persons or to transport property. §46.61.688(1)

<sup>3</sup>**Fine Schedule.** The State supreme court is required to establish a monetary penalty schedule of traffic infractions. §46.63.110. Under this law, a fine of \$35 has been established for this offense. Washington Court Rules 6.2(b) & (d)

**Licensing Action.** Although the law does not provide a specific licensing sanction for this offense, the State may suspend a person's licensing for not more than 1 year based upon an offender's frequent conviction for traffic infractions. §§46.20.291(3) & 46.20.311(1) A person is considered a frequent violator of the traffic laws if they either commit 4 traffic offenses with 12 months or 5 such offenses within 24 months. WAC 308-104-035

WASHINGTON

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. A person, when transporting a child <3 years old in a motor vehicle<sup>5</sup>, shall secure such child in a Federally approved child restraint system. §46.61.687(1)(a)
  - II. A person, when transporting a child ≥3 but <10 years old in a motor vehicle<sup>5</sup>, shall secure such child either in a Federally approved child restraint system or in a safety belt. §46.61.687(1)(b)
- Note: It is illegal to transport a child <5 years old on a motorcycle or motor-driven cycle. §46.37.530(d)

Sanctions for Failure to Require the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Traffic Infraction: Not more than \$250.<sup>3</sup> §§46.61.687(2) & 46.63-110(1)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Failure to comply with these requirements shall not constitute negligence by a parent or legal guardian. In addition, failure to use a child restraint system is not admissible as evidence of negligence in any civil action. §46.61.687(3) & *Patterson v. Horton*, 929 P.2d 1125 (Wash.App. 2 Div. 1997)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear<sup>6</sup>:

Requirements:

A person, who operates or rides on a motorcycle, motor-driven cycle or moped, must wear State approved protective helmet. §46.37.530(c)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Traffic Infraction: Not more than \$250.<sup>3</sup> §§46.63.020 & 46.63.110(1)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

A person, who operates a motorcycle or a motor-driven cycle, which does not have a windshield, must wear State approved glasses, goggles or a face shield. §46.37.530(1)(b)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Traffic Infraction: Not more than \$250.<sup>3</sup> §§46.63.020 & 46.63.110(1)

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<sup>4</sup>**Exemptions.** These requirements do not apply in the following circumstances: (1) to children riding in for hire vehicles; (2) to children riding in vehicles designed to transport ≤16 persons (including the driver) and that are operated by auto transportation companies; and, (3) to children riding in vehicles providing customer shuttle service between parking, convention and hotel facilities and airport terminals. §46.61.687(4)

<sup>5</sup>The term "motor vehicle" means passenger cars that are required by law to have safety belts. §§46.37.510 & 46.61.687(1) The "passenger car" is defined as every motor vehicle, except motorcycles and motor-driven cycles, that is used to and designed to carry ≤10 persons. §46.04.382

<sup>6</sup>Failure to wear a helmet is not an affirmative defense to the causation of an accident. *Keller v. City of Spokane*, 82 Wash. App. 1061 (Wash. App. 1996) (The State supreme court denied review, 936 P.2d 417 (Wash. 1997).)

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements: **None**

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements: **None**

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements: **None**

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

WEST VIRGINIA  
West Virginia Code

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

A person may not operate a passenger vehicle<sup>2</sup> unless they, all front seat passengers (regardless of age) and all back seat passengers < 18 years old are restrained in a safety belt. §17C-15-49(a)

**Secondary Enforcement.** Enforcement of this requirement shall be accomplished only as a secondary action when the driver has been detained for probable cause of violating another State law. §17C-15-49(c)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

Misdemeanor: A fine of not more \$25. No court costs or other fees shall be assessed against a person for a violation of this requirement. §§17C-15-49(c) & 17C-18-1(a) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of these requirements is not admissible as evidence of negligence, contributory negligence or comparative negligence in any civil action. Generally, a violation of this requirement is not admissible in the mitigation of damages. However, under certain circumstances, when it can be shown that such a violation was the proximate cause of injuries, such evidence may be admitted to reduce damages by not more than 5%. §17C-15-49(d)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>3</sup>:

Requirements:

I. A person, when transporting a child <3 years old in a passenger automobile<sup>4</sup>, shall secure such child in a Federally approved child passenger safety device. §17C-15-46 (¶1)

II. A person, when transporting a child ≥3 but <9 years old in a passenger automobile<sup>4</sup>, shall secure such child either in a Federally approved child passenger safety device or a safety belt. §17C-15-46 (¶1)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to wear a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To rural mail carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while they are performing official duties; and, (2) to persons who have a physical disability that would prevent appropriate restraint in a safety belt. §17C-15-49(b)

<sup>2</sup>The term "passenger vehicle" means a motor vehicle that is designed to transport ≤10 persons (including the driver). However, the term does not include a motorcycle, a trailer or any motor vehicle that is not required under Federal law to have safety belts. §17C-15-49(a)

<sup>3</sup>These requirements do not apply if all of the seat belts are being used; i.e., the number of passengers in the vehicle exceeds the number of seat belts available for use. §17C-15-46 (¶5)

<sup>4</sup>This requirement also applies to children riding in a van or a pick-up truck. However, such a requirement does not apply to children who are riding in motor vehicles for hire. §17C-15-46 (¶1)

WEST VIRGINIA

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Misdemeanor: Not less than **\$10** nor more than **\$20**. §17C-15-46 (¶2)  
Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of these requirements.

Effect on Civil Liability:

A violation of these requirements does not constitute evidence (1) of negligence, (2) of contributory negligence or (3) of comparative negligence in any civil action. §17C-15-46 (¶3)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

No person shall operate or ride on a motorcycle or motor-driven cycle unless they are wearing an officially approved protective helmet. §17C-15-44(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: 1st offense-An imprisonment term of not more than **10 days** and/or a fine of not more than **\$100**. 2nd offense (within 1 year)-An imprisonment term of not more than **20 days** and/or a fine of not more than **\$200**. 3rd or subsequent offense-An imprisonment term of not more than **6 months** and/or a fine of not more than **\$500**. §17C-18-1(a) & (b) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

No person shall operate or ride on a motorcycle or motor-driven cycle unless they are wearing officially approved safety, shatter-resistant eyeglasses (excluding contact lenses), eyegoggles or a face shield. §17C-15-44(b)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: 1st offense-An imprisonment term of not more than **10 days** and/or a fine of not more than **\$100**. 2nd offense (within 1 year)-An imprisonment term of not more than **20 days** and/or a fine of not more than **\$200**. 3rd or subsequent offense-An imprisonment term of not more than **6 months** and/or a fine of not more than **\$500**. §17C-18-1(a) & (b) Note: The law does not appear to assign points for a violation of this requirement.

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear<sup>5</sup>:

Requirements:

I. A person <15 years is prohibited from operating or being a passenger on a bicycle unless they wear a protective bicycle helmet. §17C-11A-4(a)  
II. It is unlawful for a parent or legal guardian to knowingly permit their child to violate the above requirement. §17C-11A-4(b)

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<sup>5</sup>State law allows a local government to enact ordinances requiring the use of bicycle helmets. §17C-11A-8

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: A parent of legal guardian, who violates this requirement, either is subject to a fine of \$10 or must perform 2 hours of community service related to child injury prevention. §§17C-11A-7(a) & 17C-18-1(a) Note: There appears to be no sanction against a person <15 years old who violates this requirement.

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

Note: See Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems above.

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

WISCONSIN  
Wisconsin Statutes Annotated and Wisconsin Administrative Code  
(WAC)

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. When operating a motor vehicle<sup>1</sup>, a person shall wear a safety belt. §347.48(2m)(b)
  - II. No person shall operate a motor vehicle<sup>1</sup> unless all front seat passengers  $\geq 4$  but  $< 15$  years old are properly restrained in a safety belt. In addition, in other seating positions (e.g., rear seats) where the safety belt restraint system has a shoulder harness, such persons shall be restrained by such belt. §347.48(2m)(c)
  - III. Front seat passengers  $\geq 4$  years old must be restrained in a safety belt. In addition, in other seating positions (e.g., rear seats) where the safety belt restraint system has a shoulder harness, such persons shall be restrained by such belt. §347.48(2m)(d) Important. See Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems below.
- Secondary Enforcement.** A law enforcement officer may not stop or inspect a vehicle solely to determine compliance with these requirements. §347.48(2m)(gm)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

**Forfeiture:** A fine of \$10. §347.50(2m)(a) However, no forfeiture may be assessed if the offender is  $< 16$  years old. §347.50(2m)(b)  
**Note:** No points may be assessed against a person's driving record for a violation of these requirements. WAC 101.01(5)(a) & (b)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Evidence of non compliance with these requirements may be admitted into evidence in any civil action. However, such non compliance shall not reduce recovery for damages by more than 15%. §347.48(2m)(g)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>2</sup>:

Requirements:

- I. A person, when transporting a child  $< 4$  years old in a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup>, shall secure such child in a Federally approved child safety restraint system. §347.48(4)(a)(1)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirements to use a safety belt do not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons operating or riding in emergency vehicles (e.g. law enforcement vehicles, ambulances, etc.) if such use could endanger the operator or another (§347.48(2m)(dm)); (2) to motor vehicle operators or passengers who are required to make more than 10 stops per mile in the scope of their employment (§347.48(2m)(dr)); (3) to persons who, because of physical or medical conditions, cannot be properly restrained in a safety belt (§347.48(2m)(e)); (4) to persons operating or riding in taxicabs (§347.48(2m)(f)(1)); (5) to persons operating or riding in motor vehicles that are not required under Federal law to be equipped with safety belts (§347.48(2m)(f)(1)); (6) to rural letter carriers or to persons who are delivering newspapers or periodicals (§347.48(2m)(f)(2)); (7) to persons operating or riding in motor vehicles while such vehicles are being used in land surveying (§347.48(2m)(f)(3)); and, (8) to persons operating or riding in a farm truck while such vehicle is being used in conjunction with the planting or harvesting of crops and is not being operated on a highway (§347.48(2m)(f)(7)).

<sup>2</sup>**Exemptions.** These requirements do not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To a child who is temporarily removed from a child restraint system to attend to its personal needs and the child is being restrained in the back seat (§347.48(4)(a)(3)); (2) to a child who has a physical, medical condition or body size that prevents the use of either a child safety restraint system or safety belt (§347.48(4)(b)); and, (3) to a child who is riding in a motor bus, school bus, taxicab, moped, motorcycle or a vehicle that is not required to be equipped with safety belts under Federal law (§347.48(4)(c)).

WISCONSIN

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Requirements: (continued)

II. A person, when transporting a child  $\geq 4$  but  $< 8$  years old in a motor vehicle<sup>2</sup>, shall secure such child either in a Federally approved child safety restraint system or in a safety belt. §347.48(4)(a)(2)

Sanctions for Failure to Require the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

I. Forfeiture: For a violation of I above there is an assessment of not less than \$30 nor more than \$75. §347.50(3)(a)

II. Forfeiture: For a violation of II above, for a 1st offense there is an assessment of not less than \$10 nor more than \$25 and for a 2nd or subsequent offense (within 3 years) there is an assessment of not less than \$25 nor more than \$200. §347.50(4)

Note: No points may be assessed against a person's driving record for a violation of these requirements. WAC 101.01(5)(a)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Evidence of a failure to comply with these requirements is admissible in any civil action. However, such failure to comply does not by itself constitute negligence. §347.48(4)(d)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

I. No person, who holds a motorcycle instructional permit, regardless of age, shall operate a motorcycle<sup>3</sup> unless they are wearing Federally approved protective headgear. §347.485(1)(a)

II. No person  $< 18$  years old shall operate a motorcycle<sup>3</sup> unless they are wearing Federally approved protective headgear. §347.485(1)(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Forfeiture: An assessment of not less than \$10 nor more than \$200. §347.50(1) Note: No points may be assessed against a person's driving record for a violation of these requirements. WAC 101.01(5)(c)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

Unless a motorcycle is equipped with a windshield, a motorcycle operator shall wear either a protective face shield, glasses or goggles. §347.485(2)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Forfeiture: An assessment of not less than \$10 nor more than \$200. §347.50(1) Note: Although the law is not specific, a person's driving record may be assessed 2 points for a violation of this requirement. WAC 101.02(4)(e)

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<sup>3</sup>This requirement applies only to persons operating or riding on Type I motorcycles. A Type I motorcycle is generally a 2 (tandem) or 3 wheeled motor vehicle designed to carry a 150 lb. person at a speed  $> 30$  MPH. Type I motorcycles with 3 wheels are of two types. The first is a general two wheeled (tandem) motorcycle with a sidecar. And, the second is an unenclosed 3 wheeled motorcycle designed to carry the operator and no more than 3 passengers. §340.01(32)

<sup>4</sup>This requirement does not apply to persons who are operating motorcycles in a parade which is sanctioned by a local government. §347.485(2)

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements: None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements: None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements: I. No person shall drive a vehicle when any person is riding upon any portion of the vehicle that is not designed or intended for passenger use. This requirement does not apply to employee's discharging necessary duties as part of their employment. §346.92(1)  
 II. No person shall ride upon any portion of the vehicle that is not designed or intended for passenger use. This requirement does not apply to employee's discharging necessary duties as part of their employment. §346.92(2)  
 III. No person shall operate a truck weighing ≤10,000 lbs. when a person <16 years old is in the open cargo area of such vehicle. §346.922(1)

Sanctions for a Violation: I. For a violation of I or II above, Forfeiture: 1st offense-An assessment not less than \$10 nor more than \$40. 2nd or subsequent offense (within 1 year)-An assessment not less than \$50 nor more than \$100. §346.95(1)  
 II. For a violation of III above, Forfeiture: 1st offense-An assessment not less than \$10 nor more than \$25. 2nd or subsequent offense (within 3 years)-An assessment not less than \$25 nor more than \$200. §346.95(7)  
 Note: Although the law is not specific, a person's driving record may be assessed 2 points for a violation of these requirements. WAC 101.02(4)(e)

Exemptions: I. The prohibitions under I & II above do not apply to employee discharging necessary duties as part of their employment or to persons riding within truck bodies in spaces intended for merchandise. §346.92  
 II. The prohibition under III above does not apply to persons (1) who are operating a farm truck while performing farm operations, (2) who are operating a truck in a parade sanctioned by a local municipality or (3) who are transporting licensed deer hunters during authorized deer hunting season with firearms. §346.922(2)



JURISDICTION:  
General Reference:

WYOMING  
Wyoming Statutes Annotated

Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

I. When a passenger vehicle<sup>2</sup> is in motion, the driver and each front seat passenger shall wear a safety belt. §31-5-1402(a)  
II. When a passenger vehicle<sup>2</sup> is in motion, the driver shall require each front seat passenger to wear a safety belt. §31-5-1402(a)  
**Secondary Enforcement.** No motor vehicle shall be halted for and no driver or passenger can be cited for a violation of these requirements. §31-5-1402(d)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts:

**None<sup>3</sup>** There is no sanction for a violation of these requirements since a person cannot be stopped for a violation. §31-5-1402(d) No violation of these requirements may be counted as a moving violation for license suspension purposes. §31-5-1402(c)(i) In addition, a violation of these requirements is neither grounds for increasing insurance premiums nor can such be made part of a person's driving record. §31-5-1402(c)(ii)

Effect on Civil Liability:

Evidence of a person's failure to comply with these requirements is not admissible in any civil action. §31-5-1402(f)

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>4</sup>:

Requirements:

A person, when transporting a child, who is  $\leq 2$  years old, who weighs  $\leq 40$  lbs. and who is  $\leq 40$  inches tall in a passenger car<sup>5</sup>, shall secure such child in a Federally approved child restraint system. §§31-5-1302(a)(i) & 31-5-1303(a)

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The requirement to use a safety belt does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To persons who for physical or medical reasons makes such use unadvisable; (2) to persons operating or riding in motor vehicles that are not required to be equipped with safety belts under Federal law; (3) to carriers of the U.S. Postal Service while performing official duties; and, (4) to persons occupying the front seat where all operable safety belts are being used by the driver or other passengers. §31-5-1402(b)

<sup>2</sup>A "passenger vehicle" means a motor vehicle designed to carry  $\leq 11$  persons and used primarily to transport persons. The term includes pickup trucks but does not include emergency vehicles, motorcycles and buses. §31-5-1401(a)(ii)

<sup>3</sup>If a person is cited for a violation of the traffic laws, they may have their fine reduced by \$5 if they were wearing a safety belt. §31-5-1402(e)

<sup>4</sup>**Exemptions.** This requirement does not apply in the following circumstances: (1) To a child whose weight, physical or medical condition prohibits the use of a child safety restraint system; (2) to a child  $\geq 1$  year old and there is no available space in a passenger car for a child passenger restraint system; however, the child must be secured in a safety belt; (3) to a child who is riding in a passenger car which was not equipped with safety belts at the time of manufacture; (4) to a child riding in a passenger car which does not have sufficient space or sufficient safety belts; and, (5) to a child riding in a passenger car that is not owned by that child's parent or guardian. §31-5-1303(b)

<sup>5</sup>The term "passenger car" means a motor vehicle designed to carry  $\leq 11$  persons and that is used primarily to transport persons. The term does not include emergency vehicles, motorcycles, motor homes, vans, pickup trucks, church buses and school buses. §31-5-1302(a)(v)

WYOMING

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems:

Misdemeanor: 1st offense-A fine of not more than \$25. 2nd or subsequent offense-A fine of not more than \$100. §§31-5-1201(a) & 31-5-1304(a) Note: The law does not specifically provided for licensing action for a violation of this requirement. However, the law does allow the State to suspend a person's license for not more than 12 months for repeated convictions of "moving violations." §31-7-129(a)(i) The law is not clear on whether a conviction of this requirement is a moving violation.

Effect on Civil Liability:

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

I. A minor<sup>6</sup> shall not operate or ride on a motorcycle unless they are wearing protective headgear. §31-5-115(o)  
II. A motorcycle operator shall not allow a minor<sup>6</sup> to ride on a motorcycle unless such minor is wearing protective headgear. §31-5-115(o)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Misdemeanor: 1st offense-An imprisonment term of not more than 20 days and/or a fine of not more than \$200. 2nd offense (within 1 year)-An imprisonment term of not more than 30 days and/or a fine of not more than \$300. 3rd or subsequent offense (within 1 year)-An imprisonment term of not more than 6 months and/or a fine of not more than \$500. Note: The law does not specifically provided for licensing action for a violation of these requirements. However, the law does allow the State to suspend a person's license for not more than 12 months for repeated "moving violation" convictions. §31-7-129(a)(i) The law is not clear on whether a conviction of either of the above requirements is moving violation.

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

None

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

None

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<sup>6</sup>A "minor" is defined as a person who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday. §8-1-102(a)(iii)(B)

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements: None

Sanctions for a Violation:

Exemptions:



## APPENDIX

**JURISDICTION:**  
General Reference:

**UNIFORM VEHICLE CODE (UVC)**  
The UVC as revised by the National Committee on Uniform Traffic Laws and Ordinances in 1992.

### Required Use of Safety Belts<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

I. When a vehicle<sup>2</sup> is in operation, persons  $\geq 16$  years old are required to use a safety belt when occupying any vehicle seating position that is equipped with such belts. §12-412(a)

II. When a vehicle<sup>2</sup> is in operation, a vehicle operator must require persons  $< 16$  years old to use a safety belt when occupying any vehicle seating position that is equipped with such belts. §12-412(b)

Sanctions for Failure to Use or  
Require the Use of Safety Belts<sup>3</sup>:

Misdemeanor: 1st offense-A fine of not more than \$200 2nd offense (within one year)-A fine of not more than \$300 3rd and subsequent offenses (within one year)-An imprisonment term of not more than 6 months and/or a fine of not more than \$500 §17-101(a) & (b)

Effect on Civil Liability:

The failure to use a safety belt in violation of law shall not diminish recovery for damages arising out of the ownership, maintenance or use of a motor vehicle. §12-412(e)

### Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems<sup>1</sup>:

Requirements:

I. When a vehicle<sup>4</sup> is in operation, a vehicle operator must properly restrain children  $< 4$  years old a child passenger restraint system that has been approved by the U.S. Department of Transportation. §12-412(c)(1)

II. When a vehicle<sup>4</sup> is in operation, a vehicle operator must properly restrain children  $\geq 4$  but  $< 6$  years either (1) in a child passenger restraint system that has been approved by the U.S. Department of Transportation or (2) in a safety belt. §12-412(c)(2)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems<sup>3</sup>:

Misdemeanor: 1st offense-A fine of not more than \$200 2nd offense (within one year)-A fine of not more than \$300 3rd and subsequent offenses (within one year)-An imprisonment term of not more than 6

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<sup>1</sup>**Exemptions.** The State is authorized to exempt individuals and classes of persons from the required use of either safety belts or child restraint systems. Such exemptions must be based on either medical, physical or occupational reasons, where compliance would not be possible, safe and reasonable. §12-412(d)

<sup>2</sup>This requirement applies only to vehicles that have seating positions with safety belts. §12-412(a) & (b)

<sup>3</sup>The UVC does not specifically provide for any licensing sanctions for violations of vehicle occupant protection requirements. However, it does provide that a person's license can be suspended based upon frequent violations of the traffic laws. §6-211(a)(2) & (3) To implement this provision, the UVC authorizes a jurisdiction to implement a point system via regulations. §6-211(b) Under, such regulations, a jurisdiction could provide for the assessment of points for a violation of any occupant protection requirement.

<sup>4</sup>This requirement applies to vehicles that are required by Federal law to have safety belts. §§12-411 & 12-412(c)

**UNIFORM VEHICLE CODE**

Required Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems:  
(continued)

Sanctions for Failure to Require  
the Use of Child Restraint Systems: (continued)

**months** and/or a fine of not more than **\$500** §17-101(a) & (b)

Effect on Civil Liability:

The failure to use a child restraint system in violation of law shall not diminish recovery for damages arising out of the ownership, maintenance or use of a motor vehicle. §12-412(e)

Required Use of Motorcycle Protective Headgear:

Requirements:

No person shall operate or ride upon a motorcycle unless they are wearing protective headgear that has been approved by the State. §11-1306(a)

Sanctions for Failure to Use<sup>3</sup>:

Misdemeanor: 1st offense-A fine of not more than **\$200** 2nd offense (within one year)-A fine of not more than **\$300** 3rd and subsequent offenses (within one year)-An imprisonment term of not more than **6 months** and/or a fine of not more than **\$500** §17-101(a) & (b)

Required Use of Motorcycle Eye Protective Device:

Requirements:

No person shall operate a motorcycle unless they are wearing an eye-protection device that has been approved by the State. §11-1306(b)

Sanctions for Failure to Use<sup>3</sup>:

Misdemeanor: 1st offense-A fine of not more than **\$200** 2nd offense (within one year)-A fine of not more than **\$300** 3rd and subsequent offenses (within one year)-An imprisonment term of not more than **6 months** and/or a fine of not more than **\$500** §17-101(a) & (b)

Required Use of Bicycle Protection Headgear:

Requirements:

**None**

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Required Use of Bicycle Eye Protection Device:

Requirements:

**None**

Sanctions for Failure to Use:

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured Portion of Vehicle:

Requirements:

I. Persons, who are operating either (1) trucks having a gross vehicle weight of  $\leq 10,000$  lbs.<sup>5</sup> or (2) any flatbed truck of any weight, shall not transport any person  $< 18$  years old in the back of such vehicles. §11-1118(a)

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<sup>5</sup>This type of vehicle is commonly known as a pickup truck. §11-1118(a)

Prohibition Against Riding in Unsecured  
Portion of Vehicle: (continued)

Requirements: (continued)

Sanctions for a Violation<sup>3</sup>:

Exemptions:

II. Persons < 18 years old shall not ride in the back of such vehicles.  
§11-1118(a)

Misdemeanor: 1st offense-A fine of not more than \$200 2nd offense  
(within one year)-A fine of not more than \$300 3rd and subsequent  
offenses (within one year)-An imprisonment term of not more than 6  
months and/or a fine of not more than \$500 §17-101(a) & (b)

I. This prohibition does not apply if any one of the following  
conditions is satisfied: (1) The back of the vehicle is enclosed to a  
height of 46 inches from the floor; (2) the vehicle has a system that  
prevents a minor from being discharged from the back of the vehicle;  
or (3) the minor has been secured to the vehicle in such a manner that  
they will not be thrown from, fall out of or jump from the vehicle.  
§11-1118(b)

II. This prohibition does not apply to the transportation of employees.  
§11-1118(c)



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