

# Colorado Child Passenger Safety Law

It's the driver's responsibility to ensure that child passengers are properly buckled up in the appropriate restraint on every trip. The child restraint must have a label that states it meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards 213 set forth in Section 49 C.F.R. 571.213, as amended.

## Requirements of the Law

### **Rear Facing Child Restraint Systems**

The law requires infants to ride in a rear-facing child safety seat until they are at least one year old and weight at least 20 lbs.

### **Forward Facing Child Restraint Systems**

The law requires that children ages one year to four years who weigh 20 pounds up to 40 pounds be restrained in a forward-facing child safety seat.

### **Booster Seats**

The law requires that children who are at least four years old but less than six years old and are less than 55 inches tall be properly restrained in a child booster seat or with a child safety belt-positioning device.

### **Safety Belts**

The law requires that any child who is at least six years old or is at least 55 inches tall, must be properly restrained with the motor vehicle's safety belt.

It is recommended that proper seat belt fit is achieved when the child meets the **5-Step Test** developed by Safety Belt Safe U.S.A. ([www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org) and click on [5-Step Test](#)).

- 1) The child can sit all the way back against the auto seat.**
- 2) The child's knees bend comfortably at the edge of the auto seat.**
- 3) The belt crosses the shoulder between the neck and arm.**
- 4) The lap belt is as low as possible touching the thighs.**
- 5) The child can stay seated like this for the whole trip.**

## **Other Provisions of Colorado's Child Restraint Law**

The law applies to children being transported in a privately owned noncommercial vehicle and in noncommercial vehicles operated by childcare centers.

Children must be buckled up in the front and back seats on every trip.

The booster seat portion of the law is secondary enforcement, meaning a driver must be stopped and ticketed for another driving offense before they can be ticketed for a violation of the booster seat provision.

The infant, car seat and safety belt provisions of the law are primary enforcement, meaning the driver can be stopped and ticketed if an officer sees an unrestrained or improperly restrained child in the vehicle.

The minimum fine is \$82 and the driver can be fined for each unrestrained child in the vehicle.

The booster seat provision of the law takes effect with the schedule below:

### **Exemptions**

Children are exempt from the law when:

- A child is being transported in a medical emergency.
- Children are being transported in a motor vehicle built to commercial standards such as a school bus.
- If a child is at least four years of age and is less than 55 inches tall and if the child is being transported in a vehicle equipped with ONLY a two-point-lap-belt system available for the child, the child shall be properly restrained with a lap belt.

**NOTE:** To ensure children are properly restrained as required in the law, follow the recommendations below:

- To determine proper installation, refer to both the owner's manual of the child restraint system and the owner's manual of the vehicle.
- All child restraint systems must be installed and used according to manufacturer's instructions

**For more information, visit [www.carseatscolorado.com](http://www.carseatscolorado.com).**

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