



Georgia Department of Driver Services  
2206 East View Parkway • Conyers, Georgia 30013 • 678.413.8745

Nathan Deal  
Governor

Robert G. Mikell  
Commissioner

### MEMORANDUM

TO: Certified Program Owners, Testers, and Providers  
FR: Kecia Bivins, Division Director of Regulatory Compliance  
DA: June 15, 2015  
RE: 2015 Legislation Impacting Certified Programs

The purpose of this memo is to remind you of some important legislation pertaining to driver safety that was enacted during the 2015 Legislative Session of the General Assembly. The following bills will become effective on July 1, 2015:

➤ **House Bill 118**

- Enables DDS to implement two new Federal Motor Carrier regulations that take effect this year.
  - Use of wireless telecommunication devices by drivers of commercial motor vehicles.
    - Prohibits holding device to conduct a voice communication.
    - Prohibits use of more than a single button to initiate or terminate a call.
    - Prohibits reaching for a device that requires the driver to no longer be in a seated position.
  - Commercial learner's permits
    - Must start with a commercial learner's permit for all class of licenses.
    - Must hold a commercial learner's permit for a minimum of 14 days.
    - Limits endorsements to P (passenger), S (school bus), and N (tank).
    - Requires a P restriction (no passengers on CMV bus) for P and S endorsements.
    - Reduces term of commercial learner's permit from 1 year to 6 months (180 days); can only be renewed once.
    - Upon expiration of the second 180 day term, must either submit a new application, retest, and pay all applicable fees or upgrade to full CDL license after skills testing.
    - If fraudulent activity is suspected, retest required within 30 days of DDS notification.
- Signed into law on May 12, 2015.
- Becomes effective on July 1, 2015.

➤ **House Bill 225**

- Brings taxi services and ride-share providers, as well as their drivers, under the regulatory oversight of the state.
- Taxi and ride-share drivers must meet the same background requirements as limo chauffeurs.
- Providers may conduct their own background check or opt for the DDS background check.
- Signed into law on May 6, 2015.
- Becomes effective on July 1, 2015.

➤ **Senate Bill 100**

- Eliminates license suspensions for purchasing/attempting to purchase alcohol underage, misrepresenting age/identity for the purpose of purchasing alcohol underage, or using a fake ID for the purpose of purchasing alcohol underage.
- Eliminates license suspensions and certified notices for truancy, dropping out of school, threatening/causing bodily harm to a teacher or another student, possession or sale of alcohol/drugs at school or school sponsored event, possession of firearm at school or school sponsored event, or any sexual offense.
- Eliminates gas theft suspensions.
- Eliminates license suspensions for fraud/false swearing.
- Eliminates license suspensions for all controlled substance violations, except DUI drugs.
- Mandates that DDS waive the Class CP learner's permit fee for customers that take the non-commercial knowledge test through a public/private high school or Third Party Tester.
- Allows holders of limited driving and interlock permits to legally drive for work-related purposes.
- Allows DDS to issue limited driving permits for qualifying suspensions that are triggered by certain violations in another state.
- Eliminates the statutory mandate that the cardholder's photograph on a Georgia driver's license, CDL, and various ID cards be in color.
- Expands the organ donor registry to include ID card holders. Allows ID card holders to donate \$1 to blindness prevention fund.
- Allows for a plea of nolo contendere (suspension avoidance) once every five years for the charge of driving while registration suspended/revoked.
- Criminalizes the act of DUI and Driver Improvement schools providing anything of monetary value to students or prospective students for purposes of enrollment.
- Signed into law on April 16, 2015.
- Becomes effective on July 1, 2015.

The following bill was vetoed by Governor Deal:

➤ **Senate Bill 76**

- Would have allowed the height of motorcycle handlebars to be more than 15 inches.
- Would have allowed motorcyclists and bicyclists to safely proceed through inoperative traffic control signals.
- Would have required drivers of motor vehicles to stop at crosswalks with pedestrian-activated rectangular rapid flash beacons.
- Vetoed on May 12, 2016.

**Please note that these are only a few of the bills from the 2015 Legislative Session. It is vital to be informed and knowledgeable of all impactful legislation. For detailed information on these bills and other pieces of legislation, please visit the Georgia General Assembly website at [www.legis.ga.gov](http://www.legis.ga.gov). You may also visit the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's website at [www.fmcsa.dot.gov](http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov) for specific verbiage regarding the CDL federal rules that become effective on July 8, 2015.**

The Department's staff looks forward to assisting and answering any questions you may have. We may be reached by phone at 678-413-8745 or via e-mail at [reginfo@dds.ga.gov](mailto:reginfo@dds.ga.gov). Thank you for helping to enhance the integrity of our regulated driver safety programs.