

Transportation

Many Indiana youth enjoy the freedom of being able to travel by themselves to school, friends' houses, or work. In order to arrive safely, read this section so you will know what laws apply to transportation.



Bicycles

You may be surprised to learn that there are laws specifically for bike riders. Bike riders, like vehicle drivers, have responsibilities when riding their bikes on the roadways. Read the following section to avoid accidents and violations.

1. Are there special laws for bicycle riders?

A bicycle is a foot-propelled vehicle. It does not matter how many wheels are in contact with the ground. When you ride a bicycle on the roadways, you have all the rights and responsibilities as someone who drives a vehicle. For example, you should ride your bicycle on the right half of the roadway with the traffic, not facing traffic. However, there are additional laws for bicycles:

- You can't carry another person on your bicycle unless they are seated upon a firmly attached and regular seat;
- A bicycle may not be used to carry more persons at one time than the number for which the bicycle is designed and equipped;
- If you and your friend are riding your bicycles on the road, you cannot ride

side-by-side unless you are on a bicycle path;

- You can't carry any package that prevents you from keeping both hands on the handlebars;
- You must have a bell or device (not a whistle or siren) that can be heard at least 100 feet away; and
- If you ride your bicycle more than 30 minutes after sunset or 30 minutes before sunrise, you must have a lamp on the front of your bike that shines white visible light from a distance of 500 feet and a light or reflector on the back of your bike that can be seen from 500 feet away.

If you don't follow these rules, you can receive a class C infraction. (See Chapter 6 for information on infractions.)

Motorized Bicycles

A fast growing issue in our society is youth driving mopeds and scooters without following the law. Read the following section so that you can be a safe driver.

1. What is a motorized bicycle?

A “motorized bicycle” is a two-or-three-wheeled vehicle that is propelled by an internal combustion engine or a battery powered motor. If your motorized bicycle is powered by an internal combustion engine, it must have an engine rating of not more than two horsepower, a cylinder capacity not exceeding fifty cubic centimeters, an automatic transmission, and a maximum design speed of twenty-five miles per hour on a flat surface. Motorized scooters and minibikes are examples of motorized bicycles.

2. Who can drive a motorized bicycle?

You must be at least age fifteen to operate a motorized bicycle. You must also have a Bureau of Motor Vehicles (“BMV”) issued identification card, a driver’s license permit, or a driver’s license. You do not need to have a special license for a motorized bicycle.

3. Are there special laws concerning motorized bicycles?

Yes. You cannot operate a motorized bicycle on an interstate highway or sidewalk. You cannot operate a motorized bicycle at speeds greater than twenty-five miles per hour. If you are under age eighteen, you cannot operate a motorized bicycle on a street or highway unless you wear a helmet and goggles, protective glasses, or a transparent face shield.

Driver’s License

Obtaining your driver’s license is a special event. For many Indiana youth, a driver’s license allows them to participate in school activities, work, and socialize. However, your driver’s license is a privilege, not a right. You must work hard to obtain your license and to keep it.

1. When can I get a learner’s permit?

You can get a learner’s permit if you are at least age fifteen and a half and enrolled in an approved driver education program. For your permit to be validated, you must be at least sixteen years of age and have passed the required examination.

If you are under age eighteen, you cannot receive a learner’s permit if you are a habitual truant from school, under at least a second suspension from school for the school year, under an expulsion from school, or considered a dropout (because you quit going to school without participating in an exit interview). (In regards to being a habitual truant, your school has the ability to decide how many absences qualifies you as a habitual truant.)

2. What does a learner’s permit allow me to do?

A learner’s permit allows you to operate a motor vehicle, but not a motorcycle, upon a public highway under the following conditions:

- You are in an approved driver education course and are accompanied by a certified driver education instructor in

the front seat of an automobile equipped with dual controls;

- You are enrolled in an approved driver education course, participating in practice driving after having started the approved driver education course, and the seat beside you is occupied by a parent or guardian who holds a valid operator's license; or
- You have a validated learner's permit, are less than age eighteen, and a guardian or relative who holds a valid driver's license, chauffeur's, or public passenger chauffeur's license is sitting in the front seat beside you. (To have a validated learner's permit, you must be at least age sixteen and have passed the required examination.)

3. When can I get a driver's license?

The BMV shall issue an operator's license if you are of age, make a proper application to the bureau, pass the test, and pay your fees. You must meet one of the following conditions:

- Be age sixteen and 180 days of age, held a valid learner's permit for at least 180 days, completed 50 hours of supervised driving, and completed an approved driver's education course;
- Be at least age sixteen and 270 days of age, held a valid learner's permit for at least 180 days, completed 50 hours of supervised driving, and passed the required examination;
- Be at least age sixteen and 180 days of age, previously been a nonresident of





is less than 18 years of age is a probationary license. During the first 180 days after receiving your probationary license, you cannot drive a motor vehicle between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. After 180 days, you cannot drive a vehicle during curfew hours (between 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. on a Saturday or Sunday; after 11 p.m. on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday; or before 5 a.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday.) These limits to driving on a probationary license do not apply if you are going to or from work; a school sanctioned activity; or a religious event; or if you are accompanied by a licensed driver at least twenty-five (25) years of age.

During the first 180 days after receiving your probationary license, you cannot drive with passengers in

Indiana but who, at the time of application qualified as an Indiana resident, held for at least 180 days an unrevoked driver's license in the state in which the applicant has been a resident, and passed the required examination.

- Be at least age 18, an Indiana resident, previously been a nonresident of Indiana, held an unrevoked operator's, chauffeur's, or public passenger chauffeur's license in the state in which the applicant has been a resident, and passed the required examination.

4. What limitations does my new driver's license have?

Any license issued to someone who

the car unless your parent, a driver education instructor, or someone who is at least 25 years old and has a valid driver's license is in the front seat with you. This limitation does not apply if the passenger is the driver's child; the driver's sibling; or the driver's spouse. You and all the passengers must wear a seatbelt while the vehicle is in motion.

If you are under 18, you are not allowed to drive while using a cell phone unless it is being used to make a 911 emergency call.

You can get an operator's license, a chauffeur's license, a public passenger chauffeur's license, or a commercial driver's license when you are at least 18 years old. A probationary license expires at midnight of the date thirty (30) days after your 21st birthday and cannot be renewed.

5. If a police officer stops me and asks to see my license, do I have to show it to the officer?

Yes. Indiana law states that a person holding a permit or license must have that permit or license in the person's immediate possession when driving or operating a motor vehicle. You shall display the license or permit upon demand of a court or a police officer authorized by law to enforce motor vehicle rules. If you do not have your license or do not show it to the officer, you commit a class C infraction.

6. When does a parent or guardian have to sign my driver's license application and what does the signature mean?

If you are under age eighteen, your application for a permit or license must be signed and sworn to by a parent or guardian. If neither parent lives in Indiana and you don't have a guardian, then the person you're living with or your employer can sign. If there is no parent, guardian, or employer, then any responsible individual willing to assume the responsibility can sign.

The person signing your application for a permit or license agrees to be responsible, with and without you, for any injury or damage that you cause and are liable for when driving. The person signing stops being responsible when you reach age eighteen. However, the person signing can file a written request with the BMV requesting that the permit or license

be canceled so that the person signing is no longer responsible.

Driving Rules

No one likes to be stopped by the police when driving. In order to avoid getting tickets and having to pay fines for traffic violations, you should be aware of and follow all driving laws. Below are a few driving laws that you should be aware of.

1. How fast may I drive my car?

Generally, you cannot drive a vehicle on a highway faster than:

- Thirty miles per hour in a town or city;
- Seventy miles per hour on an interstate;
- Fifteen miles per hour in an alley; or
- Otherwise fifty-five miles per hour.

However, if there is a posted lower speed limit, then that speed limit is the maximum lawful speed.

The law states that you should slow down when:

- Approaching and crossing an intersection or railway grade crossing;
- Approaching and going around a curve;
- Approaching the top of a hill;
- Traveling upon a narrow or winding roadway; or
- Special hazards exist with respect to pedestrians, other traffic, weather, or highway conditions.

2. Will I go in front of the juvenile court if I am charged with a traffic

violation?

Generally, the juvenile court does not have jurisdiction over traffic infractions. Examples of infractions are failure to dim your bright lights when approaching another vehicle and driving the wrong way down a one way street. Your case will go to the traffic court. However, you will go to the juvenile court if you are under age eighteen and are charged with a misdemeanor traffic offense or driving while intoxicated. Examples of misdemeanor traffic offenses are reckless driving and driving without ever receiving a license.

3. What should I do if I have a car accident?

If you are the driver of a vehicle in an accident where someone is injured or dies, you should do the following:

- Immediately stop your vehicle at the scene of the accident, or as close to the accident as possible. Be careful not to obstruct traffic more than is necessary;
- Immediately notify the police or county sheriff, or state police of the accident;
- Remain at the scene of the accident until you have done the following:
 - ◊ Given your name, address, and vehicle's registration number;
 - ◊ If asked, shown your driver's license to the person struck and the driver or occupant of or person attending each vehicle involved in the accident;
 - ◊ Determined the need for and

rendered reasonable assistance to each person injured in the accident. You may need to help make arrangements to take each injured person to a physician or hospital for medical treatment; and

- Within ten days after the accident, send a written report of the accident to the State Police Department.

If you are the driver of a vehicle involved in an accident where an attended vehicle is damaged, you should do the following:

- Immediately stop your vehicle at the scene of the accident, or as close to the accident as possible. Be careful not to obstruct traffic more than is necessary;
- Remain at the scene of the accident until you have done the following:
 - ◊ Given your name, address, and vehicle's registration number;
 - ◊ If asked, shown your driver's license to the person struck and the driver or occupant of or person attending each vehicle involved in the accident; and
- If the accident results in total property damage of at least \$1,000, forward a written report of the accident to the State Police Department within ten days after the accident.

If you are the driver of a vehicle that hits an unattended vehicle, you should immediately stop and locate the owner or driver of the vehicle and give the name and address of the owner of the car



you're driving. If you can't find the owner of the vehicle you hit, you can leave a note with your name and address, the owner's name and address, and a statement of the circumstances of the accident on the car that was struck.

If you do not comply with each provision, you may be charged with a misdemeanor. However, you may be charged with a felony under certain circumstances, such as if the accident caused the death of a person.

4. What does the law say about having to wear a seat belt?

Every person sitting in the front seat must wear a seat belt while the vehicle is in forward motion. Anyone that drives a vehicle that has a child passenger between the ages of four and twelve must have the child properly restrained by a child passenger restraint system (safety seat) or a seatbelt. If you are at least age sixteen and driving, you and the front seat passengers must wear seatbelts.

Chapter 12 Sources

Bicycles

1. Are there special laws for bicycle riders?
I.C. 9-13-2-14; I.C. 9-21-8-2; I.C. 9-21-11-2; I.C. 9-21-11-3; I.C. 9-21-11-4; I.C. 9-21-11-6; I.C. 9-21-11-7; I.C. 9-21-11-8; I.C. 9-21-11-9; I.C. 9-21-11-14

Motorized bicycles

1. What is a motorized bicycle?
I.C. 9-13-2-109
2. Who can drive a motorized bicycle?
I.C. 9-21-11-12
3. Are there special laws concerning motorized bicycles?
I.C. 9-21-11-12; I.C. 9-21-11-13

Driver's License

1. When can I get a learner's permit?
I.C. 9-24-7-1; I.C. 9-24-7-3; I.C. 9-24-2-1
2. What does a learner's permit allow me to do?
I.C. 9-24-7-4
3. When can I get a driver's license?
I.C. 9-24-3-1; I.C. 9-24-3-2
4. What limitations does my new driver's license have?

I.C. 9-24-11-3.3

5. If a police officer stops me and asks to see my license, do I have to show it to the officer?
I.C. 9-24-13-3; I.C. 9-24-13-5
6. When does a parent or guardian have to sign my driver's license application and what does the signature mean?
I.C. 9-24-9-3; I.C. 9-24-9-4

Driving Rules

1. How fast may I drive my car?
I.C. 9-21-5-2; I.C. 9-21-5-4
2. Will I go in front of the juvenile court if I am charged with a traffic violation?
I.C. 9-21-8-9; I.C. 9-21-8-51; I.C. 9-21-8-52; I.C. 9-24-18-1; I.C. 31-30-1-2; I.C. 31-30-1-8; I.C. 33-5-29.5-4(b); I.C. 31-30-1-1
3. What should I do if I have a car accident?
I.C. 9-26-1-1— I.C. 9-26-1-3; I.C. 9-26-1-8 — I.C. 9-26-1-10
4. What does the law say about having to wear a seat belt?
I.C. 9-19-10-8; I.C. 9-19-10-2; I.C. 9-19-10-2.5

