



Oklahoma  
State  
Senate

# Legislative Brief

Revised July 2001

## Graduated Driver Licensing System

### Issue Background

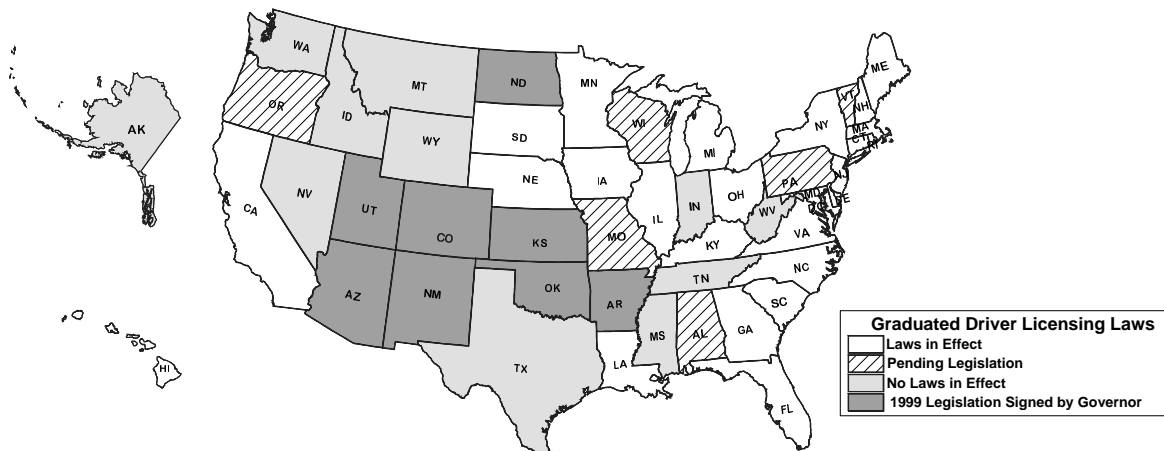
Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among teens in Oklahoma. Sixteen year-old drivers have more crashes than any other age group. Surviving the first few crucial months of driving isn't easy – 25% of new drivers have a crash or receive a ticket in their first driving year. In 1998 there were 140,000 drivers involved in crashes. 18,450 of the drivers were between the ages of 15 and 18 years of age, which represents 13% of the total drivers involved in crashes. There were 769 fatalities of which 490 of the fatalities were the drivers. Of the 490 drivers killed, 43 were drivers between the ages of 15-18. This age group represents 8.8% of the drivers killed. **Traffic collisions are the leading cause of death for 16 year-olds!**

Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) works. GDL phases in driving privileges as the new driver gains experience behind the wheel. Easing young drivers into the traffic environment through more controlled exposure to progressively more difficult driving experiences can reduce their traffic crashes.

### Summary of Actions

In response to the disproportionately high incidence of motor vehicle crashes involving youthful motorists and the need to develop a graduated licensing system, Oklahoma became the 33rd state in the nation to pass legislation to safeguard the lives of novice teen drivers. SB 413, the Graduated Driver Licensing bill, that took effect August 15, 2000, was amended by SB 747 which took effect July 1, 2001. SB 747 deleted the exemption for those students who live in school districts that do not offer driver education and authorizes parent-taught driver education courses certified by the Department of Public Safety.

### States With Graduated Driver Licensing Laws



**Graduated Driver License Provisions**

- **Age 15** Students may drive but only with driver education instructor sitting next to the students on the front seat of the vehicle. No permit or license required.
- **Age 15 ½** Students in a driver education class or under parent's supervision (certified by sworn affidavit through the Department of Public Safety) may take a written test and receive a learner's permit. Students may then drive, but only with a licensed driver at least 21 years of age in the front seat with the student driver.
- **Age 16** Driver Education students may take written/driving tests and obtain full-unrestricted license.
- Non-driver education students may take written/driving tests and obtain a restricted license. They can then drive during daylight hours – and also at night, but only to and from school, school functions, work and church-related activities. One passenger is permitted. Family members are also permitted. More non-family members are permitted if a parent or guardian is a passenger in the front seat.
- **Age 16 ½** Those who have been issued a restricted license and have not been cited for any moving violations may take a driving test and obtain a full-unrestricted license.
- **Age 17** Those passing written and driving tests may obtain a full-unrestricted license, assuming these tests have not already been passed in connection with obtaining a restricted license.

- Note:**
1. Current law regarding motorcycle licensure is unaffected.
  2. Students are in no way required to take driver education, nor are schools required to offer driver education.

**Contact For More Information:**

Jeri Trope, Legislative Analyst  
(405) 521-5693  
trope@lsb.state.ok.us

Prepared By:  
The Oklahoma State Senate, Senate Staff  
Senator Stratton Taylor, President Pro Tempore