

## **Teens and Driving**

The State of Minnesota operates under a Graduated Drivers License System. The Graduated License System is designed to move teen drivers incrementally towards full licensure. The graduated system limits high risk driving situations through restrictions and increases adult supervision. Before the novice driver can move forward through the graduated licensing system, they must meet certain performance and educational criteria that strengthens their driving knowledge, skill and confidence.

The graduated driver's license system is done in 3 phases.

### **Phase 1: Instruction Permit.**

In this phase the driver must be accompanied by a driving instructor, licensed parent, legal guardian or a licensed driver that is a minimum of 21 years of age.

### **Phase 2: Provisional License.**

In this phase the driver must:

- Be a minimum of 16 years of age to apply for the phase 2 provisional license.
- Have completed a driver's education course and held an Instructional Permit for a minimum of 6 months without a conviction for a moving violation, alcohol, or a controlled substance.
- Pass a road test.
- Complete a minimum of 30 hours of supervised driving in the presence of a licensed adult driver who is a minimum of 21 years of age. (10 of the 30 hours of supervised driving must have been nighttime driving.)

### **Phase 3: Full License.**

Applicants for the phase 3 full license must be a minimum of 18 years of age and have held a provisional license for a period of 12 months without a moving violation, alcohol or controlled substance violation. The provisional license expires on the license holders 21st birthday.

- It is illegal for any person under the age of 21 to consume alcohol or use illegal drugs at any time. Teen drivers who are cited for driving under the influence will lose their license for a minimum of 30 days for the first offense and are subject to further driving restrictions.
- Teen drivers under the age of 18, with a provisional license, may not use a cellular phone even with a hands free device; this includes text messaging and accessing the internet.

Scott County Sheriff, Kevin Studnicka provided quality information in his article in Scott County's monthly publication named "5 Points of the Star" that pertains to parents being able to suspend drivers licenses of their children under the age of 18. The Belle Plaine Police Department will cover the same information so the message gets out to parents. A parent of a teenage driver under the age of 18 has the right to suspend their child's driving privileges.

On the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Website ([www.dps.state.mn.us](http://www.dps.state.mn.us)), you can click on Drivers License Services Division and you will find a number of forms that can be downloaded. By clicking the forms on the left hand side of the page the form will open up. If you click on Drivers License tab on the top left the forms will appear. You will find Form PS03361 entitled *Withdrawal of Parental Consent/Voluntary Surrender*. If this form is completed and submitted, the child's driver's license will be suspended with no other reason other than the parent withdrawing their consent. The form can be signed and resubmitted at any time to validate the license again. This form also makes it possible for drivers over the age of 18 to suspend their own drivers license if they so choose.

As parents you may enter into a verbal, or sometimes written, contract with your children regarding driving and expectations while they are operating your vehicles. This information is provided so parents can educate their kids that driving is a privilege and not a right. If you have to threaten to take the car away, you have the ability to take the license as well. If you have any further questions regarding this article feel free to contact the Belle Plaine Police Department at 952-873-4307.