



FAQs

What You Need to Know About Pennsylvania's New Car Seat Law

In June 2016, Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf signed a law designed to make our youngest kids safer in cars, which goes into effect on August 12. This information will help you take the necessary steps to ensure that you are in compliance with new regulations. Passing Act 43 was a bipartisan effort sponsored by Sen. Pat Browne (R-Lehigh) and Rep. Mike Schlossberg (D-Allentown). "We have no greater responsibility as public servants than protecting our most vulnerable, including especially young children," said Governor Wolf when he signed the bill. Always a leader in child safety, Pennsylvania is the fourth state to pass this law, following California, New Jersey, and Oklahoma.

What does the new law say?

Children under the age of 2 must be buckled up in an approved rear-facing car seat until they outgrow the maximum height and weight limits of the car seat's manufacturer. Previously, Pennsylvania law simply required children to be in a car seat under age 4 but did not require rear-facing at any age.

When does it go into effect?

The law will go into effect August 12, 2016. But you can start protecting your child today.

What if I get pulled over and my infant or toddler is not properly restrained?

For the first year, drivers who violate the new law will receive a verbal warning. The idea of this sanction is to get Pennsylvanians used to the new law. Following the first year, each offense will incur a \$125 fine.

Why is it important for my child to be rear-facing?

This best practice was adopted by the American Academy of Pediatrics in 2011, and is also recommended by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). It is based on data and medical fact. A young child's head is disproportionately heavy compared to their total body weight and so they require the extra support that a rear-facing seat provides. Rear-facing car seats distribute the impact of a crash more equally, which better protects kids. Children younger than two are five times more likely to be killed or seriously injured in a car crash if they are in a front-facing car seat, rather than rear-facing.

Who can assist me with installing my child's car seat?

Good question. A car seat is a sophisticated product and it has been estimated that up to 75% are installed incorrectly. Safe Kids Worldwide is the organization that educates and certifies technicians on how to fit your car seat into your car. There are more than 38,000 of them. NHTSA's "[Parents Central](#)" can help you find a child car seat inspection station near where you live. All you need is your state and zip code. It is a free service.

Where can I find the height and weight limitations on my child's car seat?

It is easy to find the height and weight limitations on your child's car seat in order to comply with the new law. There's a label specifying the height and weight limits right on your child's car seat. (See photo at right.)



Where can I get more help on car seats?

- [NHTSA "Parents Central"](#)
- [PA Department of Transportation](#)
- [Sign up for Safe Kids twice monthly recall to learn about car seat recalls](#)
- [Safe Kids Worldwide](#)