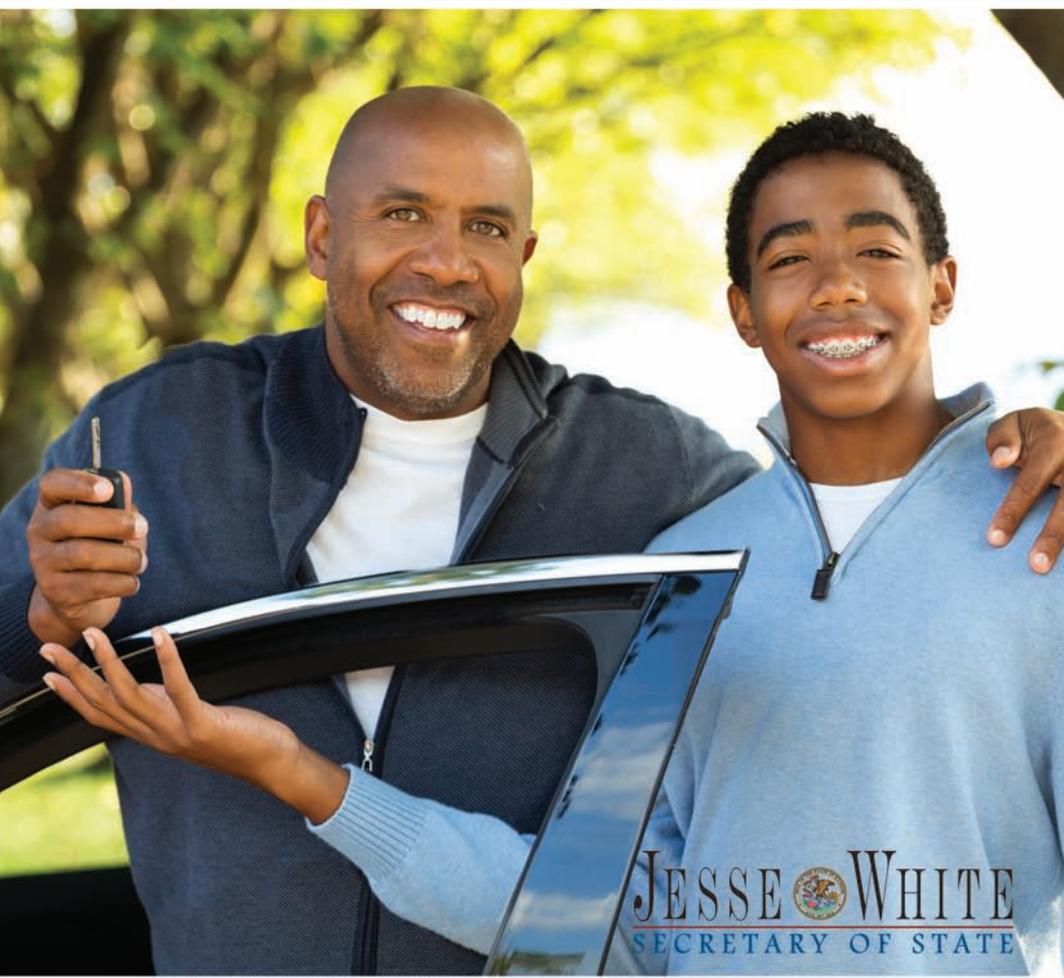


a quick guide to
SAFE DRIVING



JESSE  WHITE
SECRETARY OF STATE

WWW.CYBERDRIVEILLINOIS.COM

a quick guide to **SAFE DRIVING**

As Secretary of State, traffic safety is my top priority. That is why my office is providing this *Quick Guide to Safe Driving* booklet. You will find important information about distracted driving, aggressive driving, child passenger safety, sharing the road with others, driving in inclement weather and additional safe driving tips.

I encourage you to read this booklet thoroughly and share it with others. By being a responsible, defensive driver you will do your part to improve traffic safety and safe driving.



Jesse White
Secretary of State

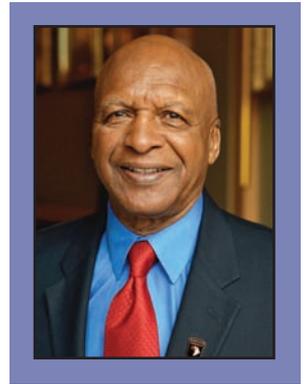


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Proper Action When Stopped by Law Enforcement

For the safety of the vehicle operator and law enforcement officers, drivers stopped by police should adhere to the following suggestions:

- Slow down and safely pull over on to the right-hand shoulder of the roadway. If there is no shoulder or it is too narrow to pull over, the driver should find the next safe location and pull over.
- Do not slam on the brakes or stop in the lane of traffic. Drivers should not stop their vehicle on bridges, curves, next to guardrails, concrete walls, medians or any place where it would be difficult for other vehicles to pass. A vehicle should not be stopped too close to the solid white line, as it may get struck by oncoming traffic.
- Stay in the vehicle with both hands clearly in sight on the steering wheel. Drivers should keep their hands on the steering wheel until the police officer instructs them otherwise or the traffic stop is complete.
- Be prepared for the officer to approach from either the driver or passenger side of the vehicle.
- Do not exit the vehicle unless asked to do so. Getting out of the vehicle can be perceived as aggressive behavior and a threat to the police officer's safety.
- Comply with the officer's request to see a driver's license and proof of insurance. If these items are in the glove box, under the seat or if the proof of insurance is stored for display on a cellphone, the driver should inform the police officer of that fact and then follow the officer's directions before retrieving the information. Vehicle operators are required to have a valid driver's license, registration and insurance in order to operate a vehicle.
- If a driver cannot identify an unmarked police vehicle and the driver as law enforcement, he/she should drive slowly and carefully below the speed limit and either (1) pull over at a well-lit, populated location, (2) drive carefully to the nearest police station and attempt to attract the attention of a uniformed officer or (3) call 9-1-1. A driver should activate the vehicle's hazard lights as a helpful way to communicate intentions with the police officer
- If drivers are being stopped at night, it is acceptable for them to turn on the interior light of the vehicle.

A traffic stop could indicate the driver has committed a minor traffic violation without realizing it. There also may be a problem with the vehicle of which the driver is unaware or the vehicle may be similar to one used in a serious crime. Many officers will not provide the driver with specific reasons for the stop until they have obtained the driver's license, vehicle registration and insurance card from the driver.

If the traffic stop results in a ticket or arrest for the driver, he/she:

- Should not debate the reason for the stop or argue with the police officer.
- Should not refuse to sign a ticket if issued. A traffic ticket requires the driver's signature. Signing a ticket is not an admission of the driver's guilt — only an acknowledgment of receiving the ticket.
- Should not be uncooperative with law enforcement at the scene. If a driver is suspected of drunk driving, refusal to submit to breath, urine, blood or performance tests can result in the loss of driving privileges.
- Should not argue about the ticket at the time of issuance. If a driver believes an offense was not committed or the ticket was issued unfairly, he/she will have the opportunity to present the case in traffic court.
- Should not resist arrest if taken into custody by the police.

A driver is to be treated with dignity and respect by law enforcement officers. If a driver believes that an officer has acted inappropriately during a traffic stop or other encounter, he/she should report the conduct as soon as possible to the officer's superiors. Officers are required to provide their names and badge numbers upon request. Written complaints can be filed with the agency's internal affairs division or civilian complaint board.

Regardless of what action is taken, police officers are legally required to document all traffic stops, which includes obtaining the driver's name and address for data collection purposes.

AVOID DISTRACTED DRIVING

Illinois law prohibits the use of hand-held cellphones, texting or using other electronic communication devices while operating a motor vehicle. Hands-free devices or Bluetooth technology is allowed for persons age 19 and over.

Using a cellphone while holding the device and utilizing the speaker phone is not considered hands free and is a violation of Illinois Law.

Using hands-free technology such as a headset or voice activated controls is considered a distraction while driving and can be dangerous. If a driver must make a phone call, even with hands-free technology, it is recommended the driver pull off to the side of the road before making the call.

The only time an Illinois driver can use a cellphone that is not hands free is:

- To report an emergency situation.
- While parked on the shoulder of a roadway.
- While stopped due to normal traffic being obstructed and the vehicle is in neutral or park.

A driver who is in a crash resulting from distracted driving may face criminal penalties and incarceration.

DO NOT DRIVE IMPAIRED

- **Drinking and driving** — Alcohol affects a person's vision and slows reaction time so it takes longer to act in an emergency. Alcohol affects a person's driving even if they are below the level of illegal intoxication. Drinking even a small amount of alcohol increases the chances of causing a crash.
- **Medical cannabis (marijuana) and other drugs** — Medical cannabis as well as many prescription and nonprescription drugs can impair safe driving. These include but are not limited to antihistamines, cold remedies, pain relievers, mood-altering drugs, hashish, LSD, heroin, cocaine, morphine, amphetamines (pep pills) and methamphetamines. Mixing even small amounts of alcohol with other drugs is extremely dangerous.

It is illegal to operate a motor vehicle in Illinois if a person's BAC is .08 or more or if a cannabis THC level of five nanograms or more per milliliter of whole blood or 10 nanograms per milliliter of other bodily substance or any trace of a controlled drug, substance or intoxicating compounds is in the driver's blood.

CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY

The Child Passenger Protection Act requires all children under age 8 be properly secured in an appropriate child safety restraint system. This includes the use of booster seats, which must only be used with a lap/shoulder safety belt. If the back seat of the vehicle is not equipped with lap/shoulder type safety belts, a child weighing more than 40 pounds may be transported in the back seat without a booster seat and secured with a lap belt only.

All persons over age 8 are required by law to wear safety belts. For their ultimate safety, it is recommended that all children ride in the back seat.

For more information on child passenger safety, visit www.cyberdriveillinois.com or call 866-247-0213.

AVOID AGGRESSIVE DRIVING

Aggressive driving is the operation of a motor vehicle in a manner that endangers or is likely to endanger persons or property. A driver doing any of the following may be committing acts of aggressive driving and pose the risk of a crash:

- Speeding.
- Running red lights and stop signs.
- Tailgating.

- Passing on the shoulder of the road.
- Cutting off another vehicle.
- Slamming on brakes in front of a tailgater.
- Improper hand or facial gestures at other drivers.
- Yelling.
- Repeatedly honking the horn or flashing the headlights.

If drivers encounter an angry or aggressive driver, they should:

- Not retaliate or in any way engage the other driver.
- Not make eye contact.
- Keep the doors locked and windows up.
- Keep enough space between themselves and the vehicle in front to pull out from behind.
- Not underestimate a driver's potential for aggression.

SHARE THE ROAD WITH OTHERS

Police/Emergency Vehicles

When approaching a stationary (non-moving) emergency/maintenance vehicle using visual signals, Illinois law requires motorists to yield, change to a lane away from the emergency workers when possible and proceed with caution. If a lane change is not possible, reduce speed and proceed with caution. Illinois law prohibits photography and the use of wireless/cell-phones within 500 feet of an emergency scene, except in certain circumstances.

When being approached by an emergency vehicle using audible and visual signals (lights and/or sirens), Illinois law requires motorists to immediately pull to the right side of the road and allow the emergency vehicle to pass. In some cases a complete stop may be necessary to allow the emergency vehicle to pass. If stopped at an intersection with two-way traffic, remain stopped until the emergency vehicle passes through the intersection.

Construction Zones

When approaching or entering a construction or maintenance area, Illinois law requires motorists to slow down, discontinue wireless/cellphone use, yield to any authorized vehicles or workers in the area, change to a lane away from the workers when possible and proceed with caution. If a lane change is not possible, reduce speed and proceed with caution.

- 1. Expect the unexpected.** Normal speed limits may be reduced, traffic lanes may be changed and people may be working on or near the road.
- 2. Slow down.** Speeding is one of the major causes of work zone crashes.
- 3. Don't tailgate.** Keep a safe distance between vehicles. The most common crash in a highway work zone is a rear-end collision. (Leave at least two car lengths between vehicles.)

- 4. Steer clear of workers.** Keep a safe distance between the vehicle and the workers and their equipment.
- 5. Observe the signs.** Warning signs are there to help drivers move safely through the work zone. Drivers should observe the posted signs until they see the one that says they have left the work zone.
- 6. Obey road crew flaggers.** A flagger has the same authority as a regulatory sign. Drivers can be cited for disobeying their directions.
- 7. Stay alert and minimize distractions.** Drivers should keep their full attention on the roadway.
- 8. Keep up with traffic.** Maintain traffic flow and posted speed limits by merging as soon as possible. Don't drive right up to the lane closure and then try to merge.
- 9. Be patient and stay calm.**

Speeding in a construction zone carries severe fines. If the offense results in a crash, the driver may face suspension of his or her driver's license. If the crash involves the death of another person, the driver may face incarceration.

Funeral Processions

Encountering a funeral procession. Motorists encountering a funeral procession must yield the right of way to all vehicles in the procession. Motorists should NOT drive between vehicles in an organized funeral procession, except when required to do so by a law enforcement officer. Vehicles are prohibited from joining a funeral procession for the purpose of securing the right of way or attempting to pass any vehicle in an organized funeral procession, except where a passing lane has been specifically provided. Local municipalities may impound a vehicle that interferes with a funeral procession due to reckless driving.

Disabled Vehicles

When drivers approach any disabled vehicle using hazard lights on a four-lane highway, Illinois law requires drivers to change lanes away from the disabled vehicle if it is safe to do so. If it is not safe to change lanes, the driver should reduce speed when approaching and passing the disabled vehicle. Speed should not be increased until well past the disabled vehicle.

Illinois law requires a disabled, unattended or abandoned vehicle to be removed from the roadway as soon as possible. Law enforcement may request a vehicle be towed at the owner's expense if it has been left along a roadway after a certain period of time.

- Interstate, Expressway or Toll Highway – after two hours.
- Highway in an urban area – after 10 hours.
- Highway in a non-urban area – after 24 hours.

School Buses/Zones

The only time a vehicle is not required to stop for a school bus is when both vehicles are on a four-lane roadway and the bus is stopped in the opposite direction from which a driver is traveling.

Any other time, a driver must stop before meeting or overtaking (passing) a school bus that is stopped and loading or unloading passengers. This includes:

- Any two-lane roadway, in rural areas and within city limits.
- Any roadway, highway, private road, or parking lot located on school property.

A driver convicted of illegally passing a stopped school bus may have his/her driver's license or vehicle registration suspended for three months and pay a minimum \$150 fine.

Bicyclists

On most roadways, bicyclists (including those on electric bikes) have the same rights and responsibilities as other roadway users. The following are important laws and safety tips regarding bicyclists:

- Bicyclists are required to travel in the same direction as vehicles.
- Drivers must yield the right of way to a bicyclist just as they would to another vehicle.
- When passing a bicyclist, motorists must do so slowly and leave at least 3 feet of passing space.
- Be especially careful and slow down in residential areas where young children are riding in the streets.

Pedestrians

Both drivers and pedestrians are responsible for traffic safety. A driver should always be prepared to yield the right of way and should not drive unnecessarily close to pedestrians.

RAILROAD CROSSINGS

When approaching a railroad crossing, a driver must stop within 15-50 feet if there is a posted stop sign, the electric signal is flashing or the crossing gate is lowered. If a railroad grade crossing has no warning devices or only a sign, a driver should slow down and look in both directions of the track and listen for a train before proceeding. A driver must yield the right of way to any approaching train or railroad equipment.

If a vehicle becomes disabled and is stuck or stalls on railroad tracks, everyone in the vehicle should get out immediately, call 9-1-1 and move away from the tracks at a 45 degree angle in the direction of the train. This action keeps everyone safe from the forward flying debris if the train strikes the vehicle.

INCLEMENT WEATHER CONDITIONS

Weather can create a driving hazard. Special care must be taken in fog, rain, high winds and winter driving conditions.

Fog

While it is not advisable, if operating a car in foggy conditions, a driver should take the following precautions:

- Turn off the cruise control and increase the following distance.
- Drive with the headlights set on dim or use fog lights.
- Slow down. If a driver sees headlights or taillights, the vehicle should slow down even more. A driver may be driving in the center of the roadway or may be stopped or barely moving.
- Do not overdrive the headlights. A driver should stay within the limits of vision in case it is necessary to stop suddenly. If the fog is too dense, a driver should pull off the road and stop. Vehicles should not drive at 5-10 mph.
- Use turn signals long before making a turn.
- Brake early when approaching a stop to warn other drivers.

Rain

Drivers are required by law to use the vehicle's headlights when operating the windshield wipers or during low-light conditions. Parking lights only are not acceptable.

- Turn off the cruise control and increase the following distance.
- Light rain, water, dust, oil and leaves cause the roadway to become slippery. A driver should increase the following distance and take special precautions on curves, turns and while braking.
- Slow down to avoid hydroplaning. If a vehicle skids while hydroplaning, the driver should try to regain control of the vehicle. If that is not possible, the driver should release the accelerator and ride out the skid.
- If a driver comes across a roadway or viaduct that has been flooded due to heavy rain, it is not advised to drive through the flooded area. It is impossible for a driver to determine the depth or current of the water. The driver should turn the vehicle around and find another route.

High winds

Wind can be a difficult problem for all drivers, but especially for drivers of trucks, recreational vehicles, campers and trailers-in-tow.

- Reduce speed and make steering corrections when going from a protected area to an open area, and when meeting large vehicles such as trucks and buses.
- Heavy rain or sleet often accompanies high winds. Be alert to wet or slippery areas. The Illinois Tollway System bans the hauling of house trailers in high winds.

Winter weather

Winter is the most difficult driving season due to possible ice, snow, lower temperatures and fewer daylight hours.

- Drive slower and increase the following distance. Roadway conditions may vary depending upon the sun, shade or roadway surface.
- Turn off the cruise control if the pavement is wet, icy or snowy.
- Remove all snow and ice from the vehicle, clear all windows, and do not start driving until the windshield is defrosted and clear. A driver should be sure to have non-freezing windshield washer liquid and the headlights and taillights are visible.
- Maintain the vehicle properly. Lights, brakes, windshield wipers, defrosters, radiator and other parts should be in good working order.
- Use snow tires and/or chains (where allowed). Snow tires give extra traction, and chains increase safety on snow or ice-packed roads. Neither snow tires nor chains allow vehicles to drive on bad roads at normal speeds.
- Gently brake in slow, steady strokes. This helps the driver determine how much traction is available. A driver should begin braking early when coming to an intersection or stop.
- Approach bridges, shaded spots, overpasses and turns slowly. They may remain icy after the rest of the roadway is clear and dry.
- Plan ahead. Carrying a blanket, food and other survival equipment, such as a shovel, in the vehicle can be helpful if stranded.
- Remain with the vehicle. If drivers do become stranded, they should remain with the vehicle running the engine only for brief times and opening the window to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. If possible, the driver should make sure the vehicle's tailpipe is free of snow and debris.

VEHICLE BREAKDOWNS/ EQUIPMENT FAILURE

Crashes often happen when equipment fails. Drivers should remain calm and keep themselves and other motorists safe by getting off the road as quickly and safely as possible.

Blowouts — A thumping sound may be a warning of a blowout. If this happens a driver should ease his/her foot off the gas pedal and keep a firm grasp on the steering wheel, pull safely off roadway and check the tires.

Loss of a wheel or tire — A driver should react the same as a blowout.

Steering failure — If drivers suddenly have no control of the steering wheel, they should ease off the gas pedal, turn on the emergency flashers and allow the vehicle to come to a complete stop. A driver should brake very gently to prevent the vehicle from spinning. If the vehicle has power

steering or a locking steering wheel, drivers should not turn off the ignition because the vehicle will lose either power steering or their ability to steer.

Brake failure — If the brake pedal suddenly sinks to the floor, a driver should pump it to build pressure. If that doesn't work, the driver should use the emergency or parking brake. To slow down, a driver should shift the vehicle into a lower gear.

Headlight failure — If the headlights fail suddenly, a driver should try using the vehicles emergency flashers, parking lights and/or turn signals and pull off the road. If the lights begin to dim, the driver should drive to a service station or pull off the road and seek help.

Stuck gas pedal — If the gas pedal becomes stuck, drivers should hook their toe under it to free it. If it doesn't become free, the driver should shift the vehicle into neutral and brake gently to slow down.

Blocked vision — If the driver's vision becomes blocked, he/she should roll down the side window to see, turn on the emergency flashers and pull the vehicle off the road.

EMERGENCY CONTACT DATABASE



The Illinois Secretary of State's Emergency Contact Database allows you to enter emergency contact information, as well as disability/special needs information, into a voluntary, secure database at no charge. In the event you are involved in a motor vehicle crash or other emergency where you are unable to communicate, law enforcement can access this information and notify your designated emergency contacts, as well as provide any helpful information to emergency/medical personnel at the scene.

For more information or to join the
EMERGENCY CONTACT DATABASE:

WWW.CYBERDRIVEILLINOIS.COM



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NOTES

**For more information on traffic safety tips and laws,
please consult the
Illinois Rules of the Road booklet at
www.cyberdriveillinois.com or contact:**

**Secretary of State ■ Driver Services Department ■ Traffic Safety
2701 S. Dirksen Pkwy. ■ Springfield, IL 62723
866-247-0213**

If you require assistance, place this booklet
in a window with the **SEND HELP** visible.

SEND HELP

If you see a **SEND HELP** sign, sound your horn and
signal to the stranded motorist. Call the police and
give the location of the stranded motorist.