

New changes coming to Louisiana's child car seat laws

As of Aug. 1, 2019, any child who is younger than 2 years old must be restrained in a rear-facing child safety seat.

Author: Kevin Dupuy

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NEW ORLEANS — Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards signed a bill into law Saturday that changes existing laws for child passenger safety seats starting later this year.

As of Aug. 1, 2019, any child who is younger than 2 years old must be restrained in a rear-facing child safety seat until they reach its weight or height limit.

A child that is older than 2 years old and has outgrown the rear-facing child safety seats must be restrained in a forward-facing child safety seat with an internal harness until they reach its weight or height limit.

A child who at least 4 years old and has outgrown the forward-facing safety seats must be restrained by a belt-positioning booster seat secured with a seat belt.

A child who is at least nine years old or has outgrown the booster seat can use the car's adult seat belt if it fits correctly on their body. That means that when the child sits all the way back against the vehicle's seat, their knees bend over the edge of the seat, the belt fits snugly across their thighs and lower hips and not abdomen and the shoulder strap crosses the center of the child's chest and not the neck.

Any children under the age of 13 must also be in a rear seat when available.

The new rules were established under Act No. 51, formerly Senate Bill 76. The bill was authored by Democrat Sen. Gregory Tarver.

<https://www.wwtv.com/article/news/politics/new-changes-coming-to-louisianas-child-car-seat-laws/>

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Louisiana Car Seat Laws

Car seat laws in Louisiana are based on both the age and the weight of a child to ensure the best protection for children of all sizes and ages. Booster seat laws are also written into these laws and are the final stage before a child can use a regular seat belt.

Every driver in Louisiana who transports a child must follow these child car seat safety rules, including all parents and any caregiver or babysitter who might drive someone else's child around. Whether or not you are a resident of Louisiana or the parent of the child in the car does not matter, since all drivers must adhere to state regulations for the protection of child passengers.

The booster seat age restrictions are set by the state, but you must always also check the manufacturer's limitations set for weight and height to make sure you do not exceed those. The car seat ages outlined by the state laws can also be flexible if your child meets the weight requirements also included in the legislation.

Always combine the manufacturer's restrictions for the specific seat you buy with the legal requirements set by the state to ensure your child's safety as well as your own compliance as a driver and caregiver.

[What are the car seat laws in Louisiana?](#)

Louisiana child car seat laws are segmented by age to allow for children to be protected based on differing needs as they grow. Any driver transporting a child younger than 13 years old is required to utilize the appropriate child restraint system. All children younger than six years of age or weighing 60 pounds or less are required to be restrained in child restraint systems, which can include car seats or booster seats.

The following breaks down the Louisiana car seat ages and requirements:

- Any child younger than one year of age or who weighs less than 20 pounds is required to use a rear facing car seat. The car seat weight restrictions might exceed the 20-pound minimum per state requirements, so feel free to keep your child facing a rear direction for as long as the seat allows.
- Any child between the ages of one year and four years old or who weighs between 20 and 40 pounds is required to use a forward facing car seat.
- The booster seat weight starts at 40 pounds or for any child between the ages of four and six years of age. The maximum weight and height should be checked for a car seat first, since it is recommended that a child stay in a car seat for as long as possible. The child booster seat is the next stage as the child outgrows the car seat option.
- The booster seat weight requirements end for any child who is at least six years of age or weighs more than 60 pounds. At that time, the child can use the regular seat belt, although it is recommended that a child stay in a booster seat for as long as possible to ensure additional safety.

[Penalties for Violating Car Seat Regulations in Louisiana](#)

Car seat safety is the responsibility of every driver who is transporting a child passenger, so you should know these laws and potential [penalties](#) if you fit that category.

Whether you are a resident of Louisiana or not does not matter, as long as you are driving in the state you must follow state laws. Each state can determine its own child passenger laws, so be sure to review any states you will drive through if you, for example, are taking a family vacation by car.

Violators of these child passenger car seat laws can receive a citation and have to pay a penalty fine. Make sure you know the differences with booster car seat age requirements versus regular car seat requirements, so you do not transition your child too early.

Types of Car Seats

It is always smart to research the safest car seats before you make such an important purchase. Both the government and consumer protection agencies regularly evaluate the safety and quality of car seats, so you can consult those lists and ratings before choosing which one to buy.

The best car seats are often made by the most popular brands, including Chicco, Evenflo and Graco, but you should always check current ratings.

There are many types of car seats available, but Louisiana car seat law requires you to utilize seats differently according to age and weight. The following are the important types to know:

- **Rear Facing:** You are required to keep your child in a rear facing car seat until at least the age of 1 or until the child weighs at least 20 pounds. It is recommended that you keep your child in a rear facing seat for as long as he or she stays within the weight and height limits of the car seat itself.
- **Forward Facing:** Once your child gets too big for the rear-facing position, you will have to switch to a forward-facing position.
- **Convertible Car Seat:** A convertible seat option can be used as both a rear facing and a forward-facing seat, allowing you to use the same seat as your child gets bigger.
- **Booster Car Seat:** Booster seats must be used until a child is six years old or weighs at least 60 pounds, but it is recommended that a child stay in a booster seat for as long as necessary. You should wait to use a regular seat belt until the child can sit with his or her back against the seat with knees bent over the edge of the seat in front.

Car Seat Installation Information

The challenges of the car seat installation are a common complaint among new parents, so do not worry if you have trouble, too. There are inspection stations you can visit to ensure you install a car seat correctly, usually at a fire station or a medical clinic.

To do correctly the installation, first make sure you read the entire car seat instruction manual to better understand the car seat or booster seat you just bought. You should also review your vehicle owner's manual to check any sections regarding car or booster seat usage.

When installing a car seat, always put it in the back seat of your vehicle, preferably in the center seat and make sure the seat is securely tightened. It should not be able to move more than an inch in any direction when you pull on it.

Finally, always double-check the child car seat every single time you use it. As time passes and the seat is used, it can become loose. Be sure to keep an eye on weight and height restrictions for the seat and upgrade the restraint system as needed as your child gets older and bigger.

<https://www.dmv.com/la/louisiana/car-seats>

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