

Texas Graduated Driver License Program

The Texas Graduated Driver License (GDL) Program was effective January 1, 2002, and created two phases of driving requirements for minors.

Phase One

You must be at least 15 years of age and have completed a driver's education course approved by the Texas Department of Public Safety and passed a written examination:

1. Hold a learner or hardship license for a minimum of six months.
2. Be accompanied by a person at least 21 years of age.
3. Maintain a valid learner license. If a learner license is suspended or revoked, the remaining six-month period must be completed after the suspension has ended.
4. Phase One does not apply to motorcycle (Class M) or hardship license holders.

With the completion of phase one, reaching the age of 16, and the completion of the classroom and driving portions of driver education, a minor is eligible to obtain a provisional license and "graduates" to phase two.

Phase Two

Phase two restricts the driving privileges of provisional license holders, and motorcycle/moped license holders (under 17 years of age), during the twelve-month period following the issuance of the license. The following restrictions apply:

1. May not operate a motor vehicle with more than one passenger in the vehicle under the age of 21 who is not a family member,
2. May not operate a motor vehicle, or a motorcycle/moped unless in sight of the person's parent/guardian, between midnight and 5:00 a.m. unless the operation of the vehicle is necessary for the operator to attend or participate in employment or a school-related activity or because of a medical emergency,
3. May not operate a motor vehicle while using a wireless communication device, except in case of an emergency.
4. The license restriction will state, "TRC 545.424 applies until MM/DD/YY" and will indicate the date phase two expires.

Upon completion of phase two, the restrictions no longer apply. This restriction will be removed at the next renewal after the phase two date expires, or the licensee may have the restriction removed by applying for a duplicate license at a driver license office and paying the required fee.

Source: Texas Department of Public Safety, <http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/driverlicense/graduateddriver.htm>