It is against the law for drivers under 18 years old to use a cellphone or other wireless electronic communication device while driving, including a hands-free device, unless making a call for emergency services or on private property.

**Exceptions to Restrictions**

When reasonable transportation is **not** available and it is necessary for you to drive, the law grants the following exceptions for minors to drive between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. or to transport an immediate family member unaccompanied and unsupervised.

The law requires that you must carry a signed note explaining why you must drive and when the necessity will end.

- **Medical necessity**
  — The note must be signed by your physician and include a diagnosis and probable date of recovery which will end your need to drive.

- **School or school-authorized activities**
  — The note must be signed by your school principal, dean, or designee, and include a reason for the school or school-authorized activity and probable date when the activity will end.

- **Employment necessity**
  — The note must be signed by your employer, verify employment, and include the probable date your employment will end.

- **Immediate need of family member**
  — The note must be signed by your parent or guardian, and include the reason and probable date the necessity will end.

- **Emancipated minor**
  — No documentation is needed for this exemption. However, when you applied for your instruction permit, you must have declared yourself emancipated by completing a Transmittal Form (DL 11) and providing a California Insurance Proof Certificate (SR 22/SR 1P) in lieu of your parent or guardian signatures.

**Minors With an Out-of-State DL**

The driving test of a holder of an out-of-state DL is normally waived. However, DMV may require a driving test for any type of DL application. A minor who surrenders an out-of-state DL to apply for an original California DL, is subject to all restrictions/requirements per California law. Proof of driver education and driver training may be required.

**Provisional DL Sanctions**

You will be restricted for 30 days if you have a violation point count on your driver record of 2 or more points within 12 months.

You will receive a 6-month suspension and 1-year probation if you have a violation point count on your driver record of 3 or more points within 12 months.

**NOTE:** A provisional DL holder who receives additional violation points during their suspension/probationary period may receive a subsequent DL suspension. You must serve the full term of any probation, restriction, or suspension even if you turn 18 years old before the probation, restriction, or suspension ends.
Instruction Permit Requirements

To decrease motor vehicle collisions involving teens, a special “provisional” driver license (DL) and instruction permit are issued to minors. A minor is a person under 18 years old. To obtain a provisional instruction permit, you must:

• Be at least 15 ½ but under 18 years old.
• Complete a Driver License or Identification Card Application (DL 44) form, which includes your social security number, if eligible.
• Have your parents or guardians sign the DL 44.
  — If both parents or guardians have custody, both must sign.
• Present an acceptable birth date/legal presence document or identity document.
  — Refer to the California Driver Handbook or the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) website at www.dmv.ca.gov for additional information.
• Provide a certificate of completion of driver education or enrollment in an integrated driver education/driver training program issued by the school providing the instruction.
  — If your driver education or driving training courses were taken in a state other than California, DMV may accept a To Secondary Schools Other Than California Schools (DL 33) form completed by the out-of-state school. You may obtain a DL 33 form at your local DMV field office, or by calling DMV at 1-800-777-0133.

**Exception:** If you are at least 17 ½ years old, you may obtain an instruction permit without completing driver education or driver training. However, to get a DL, you must provide proof that you have completed driver education and driver training or wait until you are 18 years old.

• Pay the required application fee.
• Pass a vision exam.
• Have your photograph taken.
• Give a fingerprint.
• Pass a knowledge test.
  — To pass the knowledge test, you may miss no more than 8 questions.
  — If you fail the knowledge test, you must wait 7 days (1 week), not including the day the test was failed, before retaking the test.

**Instruction Permit Restrictions**

Your instruction permit is not valid until you begin driver training; your instructor will sign the permit to validate it. You may use your instruction permit to practice with a licensed:

• Parent or guardian.
• California driver 25 years old or older.
• Or certified driving instructor.

**Note:** The person must have a valid DL in their possession and should be positioned to allow them to take control of the vehicle, if needed.

An instruction permit does not let you drive alone at any time—not even to a DMV office to take the driving test.

**DL Requirements**

To obtain a DL, you must:

• Be at least 16 years old.
• Have held your instruction permit (in California or another state) for at least 6 months.
• Provide proof of completion of driver education and driver training.
• Provide a parent(s) or guardian(s) and instructor(s) signature(s) on your instruction permit verifying that you have completed 50 hours of driving practice (10 hours must be night driving). Refer to the Parent-Teen Training Guide, available at any DMV office or online at www.dmv.ca.gov, for more information.
• Schedule a driving test online at www.dmv.ca.gov or by calling 1-800-777-0133 during normal business hours.
• Pass the driving test.
  — If you fail, you must wait 2 weeks, not including the day the test was failed, before taking the driving test again and pay a retest fee for each subsequent driving test.

**Note:** If you fail the drive test 3 times, you will be required to reapply and pay all applicable application fees.

**DL Restrictions**

During the first 12 months, a minor cannot:

• Drive between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m.
• Transport passengers under 20 years unless accompanied by a licensed:
  — Parent or guardian.
  — California driver 25 years old or older.
  — Or certified driving instructor.

**Note:** Local laws may further restrict or prohibit driving during specified hours.