

A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance on Driver Education Instruction During the 2020-21 School Year

Purpose

The Agency of Education (AOE) has received numerous questions regarding how driver education instructors may comply with driver education instructional requirements, including providing in-vehicle instruction, within the current [health and safety guidelines governing schools](#). This guidance addresses both questions. It will be updated as needed when information changes.

This guidance pertains to AOE-licensed, public school driver education teachers. Private driver education instructors should consult [guidance from the Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles](#).

Guidance for Driver Education

Education statute [16 V.S.A. § 1045](#) and State Board of Education rules [Section 2350](#) require that 30 hours of classroom instruction and 6 hours of behind-the-wheel instruction be provided to all driver education students. However, they do not require that driver education instructors provide that instruction via an in-person, face-to-face model and neither the statute nor the rules specify that this instruction must be provided concurrently.

However, as districts and schools work on how to best provide Driver Education to their students, the Agency of Education would like to remind schools that providing classroom and in-vehicle instruction in an integrated and concurrent manner remains best practice. Doing so enables students to put into practice in the vehicle what they have learned in the classroom within two to three weeks of a lesson, before the information is forgotten. It also prevents backlogs from developing when classroom instruction is provided to more students than can be provided in-vehicle instruction.

Driver education instructors should continue to direct questions to their administrators regarding how to best conduct remote instruction in their individual situations.

In-Vehicle Instruction

Driver Education teachers should follow the below health and safety guidance when providing in-vehicle instruction.

- Under Work Safe Guidance issued by the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, the current maximum occupancy of a vehicle for work purposes is three people.

Contact Information:

If you have questions about this document or would like additional information please contact: Tammy Pregent, AOE Driver Education Consultant, at tammy.pregent@vermont.gov.

- In-vehicle instruction sessions should be kept to the minimum possible duration given instructional needs.
- Student drivers and the Driver Education teacher should wash hands with soap and water for at least twenty seconds before in-vehicle instruction. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- All staff and students are required to wear facial coverings while in the car. Staff and students who have a medical or behavioral reason for not wearing a facial covering should not be required to wear one. These decisions should be made in partnership with the health care provider and school nurse.
- Vehicle windows should be open where possible.
- Students should use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol when switching student drivers in the car.
- Frequently touched surfaces in the car should be disinfected between groups for in-vehicle instruction, including the steering wheel, gear shift, windshield wiper controls, seat belt buckles and the inside and outside door handles.
- When in-vehicle instruction is conducted before the school day or on a weekend, teachers and students should receive a health screening as described on page 8 of A Strong and Healthy Start: Safety and Health Guidance for Reopening Schools, Fall 2020 before entering either the school building or the instruction vehicle, whichever is first point of contact.