Content and Performance Expectations for Driver Education

Pennsylvania Department of Education

Content and Performance Expectations for Driver Education

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XXXVIII. INTRODUCTION

The Driver Education Content and Performance Expectations describe what students should know and be able to do at the end of the thirty-hour classroom theory and the six-hour behind-the-wheel instruction:

- ◊ 14.1 Pennsylvania Laws and Regulations
- ◊ 14.2 Knowledge of Vehicle Operations
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Driver education programs that exceed thirty hours of classroom and six hours of behind-the-wheel instruction can include additional expectations.

The content expectations contain six major categories (e.g., 14.1, 14.2, 14.3) that will be taught in a thirty-hour classroom driver education program. Under the categories, expectation statements (e.g., A, B, C) are listed showing what students should learn. The indicators listed as bullets under the statements identify what students should know for successful driving performance.

The performance expectations contain six major categories (e.g., 14.1, 14.2, 14.3) that will be taught in a six-hour behind-the-wheel driver education program. Under the categories, expectation statements (e.g., A, B, C) are listed showing what students should learn. The indicators listed under the content expectations are applicable to the performance statements. Performance Expectations for 14.6 have been omitted due to safety concerns; however, alternative methods (e.g., Safety Bug, Driving Simulations, Fatal Vision Goggles) may be used to demonstrate influences upon driver performance.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education established the Driver Education Content and Performance Expectations Committee consisting of driver education teachers, a superintendent, a curriculum coordinator, a principal, representatives from the Pennsylvania Association of Professional Driving Schools, the Indiana University of Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Motor Truck Association, the Pennsylvania Association of Safety Education, the Pennsylvania State Police and the Pennsylvania Departments of Transportation and Education to create content and performance expectations.

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As part of the young driver legislation, Act 23 of 1999, the Pennsylvania Departments of Transportation and Education established a Driver Education Task Force to study driver education programs in Pennsylvania. The task force hired researchers from the Pennsylvania State University's School of Public Affairs to conduct a comprehensive study of Pennsylvania's driver education programs. Among other findings, the research identified 14 essential driving skills that could significantly reduce crashes when learned and executed properly. The skills are listed only once (designated by the same numbers as listed below) in the expectations; however, they may be taught in multiple areas. The skills are:

1. judging speed going around a curve
2. recognizing a stopped vehicle
3. staying in driving line
4. starting from a stop
5. making a left turn into traffic
6. scanning environment and staying in driving lane
7. recognizing when to brake
8. looking before pulling out from driveway or stop sign
9. judging speed and distances of on-coming traffic
10. driving at night
11. driving in the rain
12. driving in the snow
13. identifying lights, signs and road markings
14. selecting a sufficient gap to enter traffic.

The Content and Performance Expectations for Driver Education provide students with the knowledge and skills that should enable them to become safe and informed members of the Highway Transportation System. The attainment of these expectations will allow students to safely use the Highway Transportation System with greater confidence and higher skill levels.

A glossary is included to assist the reader with terminology contained in the expectations.

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14.1. Pennsylvania Laws and Regulations

Pennsylvania's public schools shall teach, challenge and support every student to realize his or her maximum potential and to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to:

CONTENT EXPECTATIONS	BEHIND-THE-WHEEL PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS
A. Identify and explain traffic laws related to safe driving. • Traffic controls (e.g., signs, signals, road markings) #13 • Right-of-Way • Speed regulations • Pedestrian rights and responsibilities	A. Demonstrate proper application of traffic laws.
B. Identify and explain laws that relate to responsible use of a vehicle. • Vehicle registration • Insurance regulations • Vehicle/emissions inspection • Seat belts • Child safety seats • Passengers in pickup trucks	B. Verify that the vehicle meets the laws relating to responsible driving.
C. Describe the Pennsylvania licensing procedures. • Learner's permit • Graduated driver's licensing	C. Acquire and have in possession a learner's permit and/or driver's license.

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14.2. Knowledge of Vehicle Operations

Pennsylvania's public schools shall teach, challenge and support every student to realize his or her maximum potential and to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to:

CONTENT EXPECTATIONS	BEHIND-THE-WHEEL PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS
A. Identify and describe the pre-trip inspection outside the vehicle. • Visual inspection of vehicle (e.g., wheels, body, lights) • Visual inspection of surroundings (e.g., front, sides, back)	A. Perform a pre-trip inspection outside the vehicle.
B. Identify and describe the pre-trip preparation inside the vehicle. • Car door locks • Key in ignition • Seating position • Mirror settings (enhanced/traditional) • Communications controls (e.g., turn signals, high/low beams, flashers) • Safety devices (e.g., wipers, seat belt adjustments, head restraint) • Comfort/climate controls (e.g., heater, air conditioning, defroster) • Hand position on steering wheel	B. Perform pre-trip preparations inside the vehicle.
C. Identify and assess purpose of modern vehicle technology. • Owner's manual specifications • Alert and warning symbols • Supplemental occupant restraint systems • Antilock Braking System (ABS) • Global Positioning System (GPS) • Electronic Stabilization Control (ESC)	C. Point out and demonstrate, when appropriate, technologies related to the operation of the vehicle as stated in the owner's manual.

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D. Describe and explain the proper application of basic driving skills. • Staying in driving line #3 • Starting from a stop #4 • Accelerating • Managing intersections • Recognizing when to brake #7 • Making a left turn into traffic #5 • Making right turns • Driving in reverse • Making lane changes (e.g., multiple-lane roadways, merge/exit situations, passing vehicles) • Selecting a sufficient gap to enter traffic #14	D. Demonstrate basic driving skills.
E. Identify post-trip procedures. • Securing the vehicle (e.g., place in park, set parking brake, remove keys) • Exiting the vehicle (e.g., open door safely, face traffic when exiting, lock doors)	E. Perform post-trip procedures.

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14.3. Perceptual Skills Development

Pennsylvania's public schools shall teach, challenge and support every student to realize his or her maximum potential and to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to:

CONTENT EXPECTATIONS	BEHIND-THE-WHEEL PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS
A. Describe perception as a mental process that is selective and can be improved. • Visual functions: focal, useful field of vision, peripheral, depth • Projected path of travel • Scanning environment and staying in driving lane #6	A. Perform an orderly visual search and use commentary driving to describe how the driver determines speed and lane position.
B. Describe visual search categories for identifying risk situations. • Restrictions to path of travel • Restrictions to sightline • Traffic controls • Highway characteristics/conditions • Other highway users	B. Utilize commentary driving and/or respond to questions to identify potential risks for path of travel or sightline restrictions.
C. Identify traffic situations and develop avoidance strategies. • Judging speed going around a curve #1 • Searching for sufficient gap before pulling out from a driveway or stop sign #8 • Reducing crash potential by adjusting speed, lane position and appropriate communication (e.g., turn signals) • Recognizing a stopped vehicle #2 • Changing speed and/or direction to avoid conflicts with sightline and path of travel restrictions • Judging speed and distances of on-coming traffic #9 • Making correct decisions at intersections by managing time and space • Applying basic driving skills to city, rural and expressway driving in various weather and roadway conditions	C. Detect risk situations and make appropriate speed or lane position adjustments.

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D. Analyze the need for divided visual and mental attention from path of travel to driving tasks, then back to path of travel for brief periods of time. • Searching from path of travel to signs, symbols and markings • Searching from path of travel for intersection problems • Searching from path of travel to new entry lane when turning left or right • Searching from path of travel to instrument panel for speed and vehicle information • Searching from path of travel to vehicle accessories for appropriate operation	D. Divide the visual and mental attention tasks to maintain roadway position while searching for risk situations.

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14.4. Decision-making/Risk Reduction

Pennsylvania's public schools shall teach, challenge and support every student to realize his or her maximum potential and to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to:

CONTENT EXPECTATIONS	BEHIND-THE-WHEEL PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS
A. Identify and know a model of decision-making. • Stop-Think-Go • SIPDE (Search, Identify, Predict, Decide and Execute) • IPDE (Identify, Predict, Decide and Execute) • SEE (Search, Evaluate, Execute)	A. Demonstrate a decision-making process through appropriate communication, followed by timely speed or lane position adjustment or by verbalizing the decision-making process.
B. Identify and describe concerns when sharing the roadway. • Motorized vehicles • Non-motorized vehicles • Commercial/large vehicles • Pedestrians • Animals	B. Demonstrate the appropriate communication, speed and lane position responses when encountering other users of the roadway.
C. Identify how emotions affect driver decisions. • Depression/Sadness • Elation • Anger • Road Rage • Fear	C. Adapt driving strategies to avoid or minimize inappropriate behavior while driving.
D. Describe the characteristics of the aggressive driver. • High Speed • Erratic vehicle movements • Gestures • Vocal outbursts	D. Detect and verbalize characteristics of aggressive drivers while exhibiting the characteristics of a non-aggressive driver.
E. Identify appropriate responses to the aggressive driver. • Eye contact avoidance • Emotional detachment • Speed adjustment • Lane adjustment	E. Implement the appropriate communication, speed and lane position responses when encountering an aggressive driver.

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F. Identify driver distractions and the appropriate responses to them. • Within vehicle (e.g., passengers and pets, food and drinks, cell phones and other electronics) • Outside vehicle (e.g., construction zones, people, accident and emergency vehicles)	F. Execute appropriate behaviors when encountering driving distractions.
G. Analyze the consequences of high-risk driver actions and human error. • Vehicular crashes • Injury or death • Civil liability • Property damage • Financial loss • Pennsylvania Point System • Fines • Loss of license	G. Practice reduced-risk driving strategies to avoid the consequences of unsafe driving.

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14.5. Driving Conditions

Pennsylvania's public schools shall teach, challenge and support every student to realize his or her maximum potential and to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to:

CONTENT EXPECTATIONS	BEHIND-THE-WHEEL PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS
A. Describe hazardous conditions and their effects on vision, motion and steering control tasks while driving. • Snow #12 • Rain #11 • Fog • Sleet/ice • Hydroplaning • Traction loss	A. Evaluate the driving situation and adapt to the specific hazardous condition with appropriate communication, speed and lane position adjustments.
B. Identify challenges of night driving and appropriate responses to them. #10 • Reduced visibility • Eye fatigue • Overdriving headlights	B. Evaluate nighttime driving challenges and adapt to the increased risk.
C. Identify the dangers of vehicle malfunctions. • Warning indicators (e.g., dashboard, smoke, sounds) • Failures (e.g., tires, brakes, steering) • Stuck accelerator • Engine stalls • Loss of headlights or forward vision due to vehicle malfunction	C. Respond appropriately to simulated or real vehicle malfunctions.
D. Identify the dangers of sudden emergencies. • High water • Vehicle crossing centerline • Vehicle not yielding at intersection • Vehicle running off roadway • Traction loss to front tires • Traction loss to rear tires	D. Respond appropriately to simulated or real sudden emergencies.

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14.6. Influences Upon Driver Performance

Pennsylvania's public schools shall teach, challenge and support every student to realize his or her maximum potential and to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to:

CONTENT EXPECTATIONS	BEHIND-THE-WHEEL PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS
A. Know legal aspects of alcohol and other drug use. • Just saying "No" to alcoholic beverages and other drugs • Terms and meanings associated with drinking and driving • Penalties when intoxicated • Implied consent • Zero tolerance B. Evaluate the factors that influence individuals to use alcohol and other drugs. • Advertising • Peer pressure • Social norms • Culture • Holidays C. Define and analyze the problem of driving under the influence (DUI). • Significance of problem • Consequences • Solutions D. Identify and analyze the physiological and psychological effects of alcohol on the driver. • Process of alcohol entering and exiting from the body • How alcohol affects people differently • Changes to the central nervous system E. Identify and analyze the physiological and psychological effects of drugs. • Types (i.e., over-the-counter, prescription, controlled substances) • How drugs affect people differently • Changes to the central nervous system	Performance Expectations for 14.6. have been omitted due to safety concerns.

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F. Identify and analyze how alcohol and other drugs affect driving performance.
- Impaired judgment and reasoning
- Visual impairment
- Slower motor skills
- Increased response time
- Loss of reality

G. Identify types of fatigue and how to combat their effects.
- Mental and physical types (e.g., boredom, eye strain, drowsiness)
- Symptoms (e.g., slowed response time, daydreaming, heavy eyes)
- Methods to delay fatigue (e.g., exit and walk around the vehicle every two hours, pull over and take a nap, stop for a bathroom/snack break)

XXXIX. GLOSSARY

Aggressive driver:	A person who operates a motor vehicle in a high-risk manner that endangers or is likely to endanger persons or property.
Antilock Braking System (ABS):	A mechanism designed to enable a driver to maintain steering control and to keep the wheels from locking when braking abruptly.
Civil liability:	Non-criminal accountability for a person's driving actions.
Commentary driving:	Student verbalization of the decision-making processes regarding effective communication, speed and lane position adjustment while driving.
Culture:	The customs, beliefs, social norms and material traits of a social group.
Decision-making:	Determining the best communication, speed and lane position adjustments for achieving reduced-risk solutions to traffic situations.
Divided attention:	Visual and mental processes needed to split attention between path of travel and other driver and non-driver task requirements.
Driver distractions:	Events that direct the driver's attention away from the driving task.
Driving lane:	A portion of the highway/roadway used by a vehicle traveling in one direction.
Driving line:	The path of travel of a vehicle in a driving lane.
Driving Under the Influence (DUI):	An offense a driver may be charged with in Pennsylvania if driving after consuming alcohol and/or other drugs.

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Electronic Stabilization Control (ESC):	A computerized handling and stability system that improves vehicle traction and stability in three areas of performance: accelerating, cornering and braking.
Emissions inspection:	A periodic check of the vehicle's exhaust to evaluate combustion efficiency.
Fatigue:	Physical or mental exhaustion.
Global Positioning System (GPS):	Use of satellite technology to identify the exact location of a vehicle.
Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL):	Multi-stage system of licensing (i.e., permit, junior license, regular license).
Hazardous condition:	A situation involving reduced visibility and/or traction.
Hydroplaning:	When a vehicle's tires lose contact with the road and ride on top of a film of water.
Implied consent:	A law that states that a driver must relinquish his/her driver's license if he/she refuses to take a chemical test (blood, breath or urine) if arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence.
Learner's Permit:	A state document required for beginning drivers to operate a vehicle while under the supervision of an experienced driver.
Motor skills:	Physical abilities that permit one to perform driving tasks.
Non-aggressive driver:	Someone who operates a motor vehicle in a manner that may not endanger persons or property.
Overdriving headlights:	Driving so fast at night that the driver is unable to stop within the range of the headlights.
Peer pressure:	The influence of friends on one's beliefs, values and behavior.
Perception:	The process of applying meaning to what is seen (i.e., identifying, predicting, deciding what to do when driving).

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Pre-trip/Post-trip inspection:	Before and after driving checks to ensure that the vehicle is in proper working order.
Response time:	A skill-related component of driver education that relates to the time elapsed between stimulation and the beginning of the reaction to it.
Right-of-Way:	The privilege of having immediate use of a certain part of a roadway when two or more users of the roadway want to use it at the same time.
Risk situation:	The possibility of having a traffic conflict that could result in a crash.
Road rage:	An uncontrolled emotional response by a driver to a traffic situation (e.g., deliberate tailgating, yelling at other drivers, assaulting another driver). An extreme form of aggressive driving that may be considered as a criminal offense.
Social norms:	Acceptable standards that reasonable and prudent people, communities or societies expect from individuals.
Supplemental occupant restraint systems:	Non-adjustable passive protective devices that restrain the driver and passengers during a collision (e.g., air bags, automatic seat belts).
Regulation speed:	Guidance for drivers to adjust rate of movement according to weather and roadway conditions.
Zero Tolerance:	A law stating that drivers under the age of 21 with measurable blood alcohol concentration of .02 percent will be charged with Driving Under the Influence.