

Nova Scotia



Driver's Handbook



Message to the Motorist

The information in this handbook is intended for all drivers. Road safety is a priority of the Province of Nova Scotia, and every driver, no matter how experienced, is encouraged to refresh their memory and skill from time to time.

Safe driving requires knowledge and skill. It must be learned through practice and a personal commitment to safety. Driving experience is extremely important, but experience itself is not enough. To become a safe driver you must continue to improve your skills, correct poor driving habits, and learn from your mistakes.

This handbook will familiarize you with the rules governing the operation of motor vehicles. Also included in this handbook is information about licensing, registration, inspection, and collision reporting.

The contents of this handbook explain the basic provisions of the law in Nova Scotia using language and terms that are easily understood by the general public. For the actual expression of the law, refer to the Motor Vehicle Act and Regulations.

Most driving decisions are based on judgement—yours and that of the other users of our roads and highways. Your attitude toward your own safety and that of others is an important factor.

Observing the rules and advice in this handbook will help you become a safer driver and avoid being involved in a collision. Drive defensively and remember—Caution is Critical.

Traffic laws are for your protection. Please observe them.

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There have been some changes to the Graduated Driver Licensing Program and rules of the road since the publication of this handbook.

These changes are outlined in the next four pages. Read this information and keep it in mind as you study for your test.

Be aware that the rules and laws for driving can change. Pay attention to changes even after you have your licence – learn about changes by visiting www.NovaScotia.ca or by reading the latest copy of the Nova Scotia Driver Handbook.

Important Graduated Driver Licence Changes

In chapter one, you will learn about the *Nova Scotia Graduated Driver Licensing* program. On April 1, 2015, a third stage of GDL was added to the program – it is called the *restricted individual* stage.

There are now three stages of GDL:

- 1 The learner's licence stage (see page 6)
- 2 The newly licensed stage (see page 16)
- 3 The restricted individual stage

Restricted Individuals (Class 5R or 6R with condition 47)

Once you leave the newly licensed stage, you enter the restricted individual stage. You will remain in this stage for 2 full years.

Restrictions

When you have a Class 5R or 6R with condition 47, you must comply with 2 important restrictions:

- 1 You must have zero alcohol or drugs in your body while driving
- 2 You cannot be a supervising driver (previously called and experienced driver). This means you cannot teach someone to drive or be a supervising driver for a newly licensed driver during the curfew hours between midnight and 5:00 am.

No upgrade while a learner or Newly Licensed Driver

An upgrade to a higher licence class (1–4) is not allowed while you are a learner or newly licensed driver. However, you can upgrade your licence while in the restricted individual stage.



Your Driver's Licence

Exiting the GDL program

You will not exit the GDL program until you have finished the restricted individual stage. To complete the graduated licence program and receive your full Class 5 or Class 6 licence you must do the following:

- Have your Class 5N or 6N for at least 2 years
- Complete an approved driver training program and provide a copy to the Registry of Motor Vehicle or Access Nova Scotia
- Complete the 2-year driving period after graduating to the restricted individual stage

If you do not complete the above, you will stay in the GDL program indefinitely and will continue to be subject to the program restrictions.

You are not required to obtain a replacement driver's licence when you graduate from the newly licensed or restricted individual stage, but may do so if you wish. There is no fee to exchange your licence if you use the same photo.

Learner's Licence Expiry

A learner's licence is valid for a maximum of 2 years (previously 1 year). You must successfully pass the road test to enter the next GDL stage before your learner's licence expires. If you do not, you must rewrite the learner's test before you may renew your learner's licence.

Emergency vehicles

On page 45, you will learn the rules for sharing the road with emergency vehicles.

These rules have not changed. However, there are new rules that require you to slow down and move over.

If you see an emergency vehicle pulled over with its lights flashing, slow down to 60 km/h or obey the speed limit if it's lower than 60 km/h.

If you're on a road with 2 or more lanes in your direction, you must also move into another lane farther away from the stopped vehicle if you can do so safely.

You don't need to slow down or move over if the vehicle is on the other side of the median on a divided highway.



Emergency
Vehicles

Types of vehicles

Slow down and move over for:

- ambulances
- police vehicles
- fire department vehicles
- Department of Lands and Forestry fire vehicles
- fire chiefs' or deputy fire chiefs' vehicles
- conservation officers' vehicles
- motor vehicle and carrier inspector's vehicles
- public safety vehicles, like sheriffs and bridge patrol officers
- tow trucks that are stopped at the scene of a fire or collision or assisting a vehicle.

2

Rules of the Road

Yield to transit buses

There are new rules requiring you to yield the right of way to transit buses.

When a stopped transit bus is signalling its intent to re-enter the flow of traffic, yield the right of way if approaching the bus from the rear to allow it to move back into traffic.



Yield to
transit bus

You must yield whenever the posted speed limit is 60 km/h or less and it is safe to do so.

This rule does not apply to school buses.

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