CALIFORNIA CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY LAW

Protect your child — it is the law.



Use of child passenger restraint system for child under age 8

Except as provided in Section 27363 of the Vehicle Code, a parent, legal guardian, or driver shall not transport on a highway in a motor vehicle a child who is under eight (8) years of age, without properly securing that child in a back seat in an appropriate child passenger restraint system meeting federal motor vehicle safety standards.

Exemptions:

- A child under eight (8) years of age may ride properly secured in an appropriate child passenger restraint system in the front seat under any of the following circumstances:
  - There is no rear seat.
  - The rear seats are side-facing seats.
  - The rear seats are rear-facing seats.
  - The child passenger restraint system cannot be installed properly in the rear seat.
  - All rear seats are already occupied by children seven years of age or under.
  - Medical reasons require that a child cannot ride in the rear seat. Proof of the child's medical condition may be required.
  - However, a child cannot be transported in a rear-facing child passenger restraint system in a front seat that is equipped with an active frontal passenger airbag.
- A child under eight (8) years of age who is four feet nine inches (4'9") in height or taller may be *properly restrained by a safety belt* instead of a child passenger restraint system. *Properly restrained by safety belt means that the lower (lap) portion of the belt crosses the hips or upper thighs and the upper (shoulder) portion of the belt crosses the chest in front of the occupant*.
- A child weighing more than 40 pounds may be transported in the backseat of a vehicle while wearing only a lap safety belt when the backseat of the vehicle is not equipped with a combination lap and shoulder safety belt.
- In case of a life-threatening emergency or when a child is being transported in an authorized emergency vehicle, if there is no child passenger restraint system available, a child may be transported without the use of that system, but the child must be secured by a seatbelt.
- A court may exempt a child from the Child Safety Belt and Passenger Restraint Requirements if certain determinations are made.

Use of child passenger restraint system for child between 8 and 16

A parent, legal guardian, or driver shall not transport on a highway in a motor vehicle a child who is eight (8) years of age or older, but less than 16 years of age, without properly securing that child in an appropriate child passenger restraint system or safety belt meeting federal motor vehicle safety standards.

Call your local health department for more information at:

(626) 744-6000

For more information on safety seats: www.chp.ca.gov

CDSS STATE OF CALIFORNIA • CHILD CARE LICENSING • DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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