

# Driver Training Schools Policies and Procedures

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
**LICENSING**

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## 1.1 Background and Authority

The Department of Licensing (DOL) is responsible for regulating and enforcing the rules for driver training schools, their owners, and instructors. The Department's role in regulating driver training schools ensures that students receive high-quality instruction, contributing to safer roads and drivers in Washington State. This authority comes from the following laws:

- **RCW 46.82.285.** Application of uniform regulation of business and professions act.
- **RCW 46.82.290.** Administration of chapter—Adoption of rules.
- **WAC 308.108.010.** Promulgation—Authority.
- **RCW 18.235.** Uniform Regulation of Business and Professions Act

These laws give DOL the power to oversee and ensure compliance with the required standards and practices.

DOL is responsible for regulating:

- Licensing of driver training schools, instructors, and operators.
- Ensuring compliance with curriculum and instructional standards.
- Inspecting facilities, vehicles, and records.
- Investigating complaints and enforcing penalties for violations.

For questions regarding regulations, processes, and enforcements, use the following email and telephone numbers to contact the DOL Driver Training School Program or visit our website at [dol.wa.gov](http://dol.wa.gov).

Driver Training School (DTS) Program

Telephone: 360-902-3703

Email: [tse@dol.wa.gov](mailto:tse@dol.wa.gov)

## 1.2 Initial Driver Training School License

According to state law, you must have a license from the Department of Licensing to run a driver training school. The school's license must be clearly displayed at every location before the school can:

- Schedule, enroll, or accept students for any courses.
- Provide students with verification of enrollment.
- Start any classroom or behind-the-wheel instruction.

To get a license, applicants must meet the state's requirements for business ownership, facility standards, vehicle standards, and follow DOL program guidelines.

An initial driver training school license must meet the minimum requirements of RCW 46.82.310, RCW 46.82.360, and WAC 308.108 and provide the following:

- A Unified Business Identifier (UBI) number
- A rental, usage agreement, or title with proof of ownership for the driver training school location
- Liability insurance for building and vehicles
- Vehicle registration information
- Photos of the instruction vehicle(s) and required components as listed in section 2.2: Vehicle Requirements
- A complete DTS Supplemental Declaration for Online Application form
- A Student Record form
- A DTS policy agreement
- A Curriculum Submission form
- A Behind-the-wheel Instruction Log
- A complete driver training school license application including;
  - A paid, non-refundable \$500 licensing fee
  - Submission through Secure Access Washington or by mail

- A fingerprint and background check of all owners, instructors, and other staff affiliated with the school after each applicant applies

### **License issuance process**

Once DOL receives a complete and acceptable application, it will follow the steps outlined in RCW 46.82.310, RCW 46.82.320, and WAC 308.108.025:

- The auditor will schedule inspections of the school and its vehicles.
  - Inspections happen only when the facility and vehicles are ready for use.
  - For new or remodeled buildings, an occupancy permit must be submitted before the inspection.
- After the business practices, facilities, records, and vehicles are inspected and determined to meet the required standards, the school will be issued a one-year license.
- The DTS program will conduct a follow-up audit to check:
  - Student records.
  - Accountability and storage of the Traffic Safety Education (TSE) certificates.
  - Preparation of student completion reports.
  - Proper display of approved curricula and licenses.

### **Note:**

- If an application is incomplete, it will remain on file for 120 days. After that period, the application will be considered abandoned.

## 1.3 License Renewal

### **Submit before expiration**

A complete renewal application and the required fee must be submitted to the Department of Licensing before the school license expires. The renewal fees are:

- \$250 for the main location
- \$125 for each branch location

### **Complete applications only**

The renewal application must include all of the following:

- Paid fees
- A valid lease, usage agreement, or title proof of ownership
- Vehicle list
- Liability insurance

### **Consequences of late renewal**

Schools will be immediately out of service if the license is not renewed on time. If a license is not renewed within 30 days after expiration, all related branch licenses (e.g., branch offices and classrooms) will become inactive. Instruction is not allowed at any inactive location.

### **License void after 30 days**

If a renewal application is submitted more than 30 days after the license expiration, the license will be void. A new application and full payment of all fees will be required to continue operations. Instruction is prohibited beyond 30 days after the license expires. Schools must always display a valid license (or equivalent) to conduct business.

## 2.1 Facility Requirements

### Submitting a usage or lease agreement

The term of usage or lease agreement must include all of the following:

- An effective date
- An expiration date
- Location address
- Signatures by both parties

### School and branch locations

School and branch locations must meet the requirements of RCW 46.82.360 and WAC 308.108.100.

- The school must have a dedicated location that is owned, rented, or leased and used exclusively for driver instruction.
- The location must be in a district zoned for business or commercial purposes or zoned for conditional use permits for schools, trade schools, or colleges.
- Driver training schools cannot be located within 1,000 feet of a Department of Licensing office where driver's license examinations are conducted. This distance is measured along public streets by the nearest route.
- Driver training schools cannot be located in any of the following:
  - House trailers
  - Residences
  - Tents
  - Temporary stands or addresses
  - Buses
  - Hotel rooms, rooming houses, apartment houses, or single/multi-unit dwellings
- Driver training schools cannot be solely telephone answering services

- Branch offices or classrooms must be located within a 35-mile radius of the main place of business.
- The DOL may allow exceptions for schools in counties with low population density.
- Driver training schools may lease classroom space in public or private schools regulated by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI); however, a school is still required to have its own established place of business and use its own classroom regularly.

### **Classroom space requirements**

A driver training school classroom space must meet all the requirements of RCW 56.82.360, WAC 308.108.100, and WAC 308.108.120. They must:

- Provide enough seats and table or desk space for all students in the class.
- Ensure the number of students does not exceed the city's fire code requirements for the classroom.
- Be fully equipped with all necessary tools and materials for effective student training and instruction.
- Ensure each activity is conducted without interference. If the classroom shares space with the business office, it must be separated by walls, partitions, or alternate scheduling.



## 2.2 Vehicle Requirements

### Submitting vehicle registration information

Vehicle registrations must be submitted for each vehicle used by the driver training school for the purposes of instruction or examination and include all of the following:

- Vehicle identification number (VIN)
- Vehicle make and model
- License plate number
- Registration number
- Expiration date
- Name and address of the registered owner

### Traffic safety education vehicles

Vehicles used for the purpose of traffic safety education or examination must meet the requirements of RCW 46.82.360 and WAC 308.108.110. Vehicles must have (and include photos of with initial application)

- Dual controls for the foot brake and clutch, or just the foot brake in vehicles with an automatic transmission.
- An instructor's rearview mirror.
- A sign displayed on the back, top, or both, of the vehicle, which must:
  - Be at least 20 inches wide and 10 inches tall.
  - Include the words **Student Driver, Instruction Car, or Driving School** in letters at least 2.5 inches high.
  - Show the school's name and telephone number in letters at least 1 inch high below the primary text.
  - Be readable from a distance of 100 feet in clear daylight.
  - Be displayed at all times when instruction is being given.
- Vehicle Records, including:
  - The original insurance policies.
  - Copies of the vehicle registration.
  - Annual vehicle inspection reports.

- A first aid kit with at least 20 approved items which may include:
  - bandages
  - gloves
  - dressings
  - tweezers
  - scissors
  - medical tape
  - antiseptic wipes
  - cold compresses
  - eyewash
  - thermal blanket
- A fire extinguisher that is fully charged and safely secured in the vehicle.
- An emergency strobe light, a reflective triangle, or two 18-inch traffic cones for emergencies.

Vehicles must undergo an annual inspection that meets DOL safety and equipment standards.

Vehicles must be used only for driver training purposes whenever instruction is being given.

Vehicles failing to meet RCW motor vehicle equipment requirements or instructional standards, or otherwise could be cited by law enforcement, must not be used for student instruction or examination until deficiencies are corrected.

**Note:** You may use the [Driver Training School Vehicle Inspection Report](#) to help you stay in compliance with the required vehicle components.

## **Changes in school vehicles**

To stay in compliance with initial licensing requirements, notify DOL within 10 days of removing a vehicle from service or to schedule an inspection of a new vehicle being added to service. Update vehicle information through the Professional Business Licensing System.

Include photos of:

- The vehicle
- License plates
- Signage
- Mirror and brake installation
- Safety equipment
- The updated insurance certificate of liability.

Do not use the vehicle for instruction until granted permission.

## 2.3 Insurance Requirements

### Submitting liability insurance

A copy of the certificate of liability insurance must be submitted to cover each licensed location and instructional vehicle and include all of the following:

- Policy number
- Effective date
- Expiration date
- Year, make, and model of vehicles
- The name and address of the insured
- The name and address of the insurance company
- The type of coverage, limits, and details
- The Department of Licensing as the certificate holder, with the following address: PO Box 9027, Olympia, WA.

### Liability insurance coverage

A copy of the certificate of liability insurance covering building premises for each licensed location and instructional vehicle must meet the minimum requirements of RCW 46.82.310 and include all of the following:

- Coverage provided by an insurance company authorized to do business in Washington State.
- At least \$1 million in automobile liability coverage, covering both property damage and uninsured motorists.
- At least \$1 million in coverage for each building and
  - a \$2 million aggregate if the location will be offering exams.

\* Additional insurance required for exam locations.

**Note:** Insurance must be valid and maintained throughout the school's license period. If there are any changes to the coverage, such as cancellation, expiration, or renewal, the school must notify DOL and provide proof of continuous coverage within 10 working days.

## 2.4 Compliance Inspections

Driver training schools and instructors must undergo regular inspections to ensure compliance with state laws and regulations. These inspections are conducted by the Department of Licensing and cover various aspects of the school's operations.

### Timing of inspections

- After initial licensure, there is a 90-day follow-up inspection.
- Regular inspections occur *at least* once a year but may include additional inspections, follow-ups, or unannounced monitoring of classroom and driving instruction.
- Changes in location, ownership, or vehicles may trigger additional inspections to confirm compliance.

### Inspection components

- **Classroom Facilities.** Seating, equipment, and general compliance with state requirements.
- **Records.**
  - Review of classroom and behind-the-wheel (BTW) training records.
  - Review of school and examination policy
  - Examination of BTW scheduling logs, including documentation of no-show replacements.
  - Verification that all records are stored securely and maintained for at least three years.
- **Lease Agreements.** Ensure the school has a valid and current lease or usage agreement and identify any changes to leaseholders.
- **Reports.** Check course completes in Licensing Express.
- **Disciplinary Action.** Conspicuous display of disciplinary actions issued to the school or instructors.

During annual audits of the main office (not branch locations), inspectors will review the school's overall compliance with program policies and procedures, including administrative, curriculum, instructor, and school requirements.

### **Audit components include**

- Instructor records
- Business records
- Vehicle and facility insurance
- Advertisements
- Vehicle Inspections
  - Operational safety
  - Registration and proof of insurance
  - Required safety equipment and signage
  - Vehicle registration
  - Annual inspection reports
  - Collision reports and maintenance records

If vehicles are not at the main office, the school must arrange for them to be available at a branch or another location for inspection.

**Note:** Documents related to reporting requirements (e.g., Student Completion Reports) or renewals (e.g., fees, insurance, or lease agreements) requested by the audit team must be submitted within the time frame mentioned in the request. Any documents collected during the audit are for review purposes only and will not replace required submissions.

## 2.5 Changes to Location, Ownership, or School Closure

If a school or classroom location changes, an Account Maintenance Request (AMR) within the Professional Business Licensing System must be submitted within 10 business days. A new inspection will be required to ensure the new location meets the same requirements as the initial certification.

- The inspection will confirm that all initial certification standards for a new location are met (refer to Initial Certification requirements).
- Location changes do not require a fee unless the change is part of a regular renewal or ownership change (see WAC 308-108-025 for fee details).

If there are changes to a school's ownership, officers, directors, or if the school is closing, the following requirements apply:

### **Ownership or Leadership Changes**

- The new owner must submit a complete application, including all fees, within 10 business days of the change if a new UBI is submitted.
- If the same UBI is used and only the owner is changed (update with DOR), notify DOL of the new ownership.
- The school can continue operating for up to 60 days after the transfer, while the new application is under review. Extensions beyond 60 days can require a new application and additional fees.
- A closing inspection will be conducted to:
  - Collect unused traffic safety certificates.
  - Collect licenses.
  - Confirm the storage location for student records.
  - Collect any unsubmitted Student Course Completion Reports.

## **New ownership requirements**

- The new owner must submit a new application that includes all of the following:
  - Application fees
  - A new lease
  - A sales agreement
  - An updated insurance liability certificate
- An initial inspection will verify that the school meets all certification requirements, including all of the following:
  - Updates to the list of governing persons with the Department of Revenue.
  - Submission of franchise approval (if applicable).
  - Changes to the stock ledger (if applicable).

## **Restrictions and notifications**

- Ownership transfer will not be approved if there is pending administrative action against the current owner under RCW 46.82.310(6)(d).
- The transferred license remains subject to suspension, revocation, or denial as outlined in RCW 46.82.350 and RCW 46.82.360.
- If the school is closing, the owner must notify the DOL in writing within 30 days (see *administrative requirements*).



## 2.6 School Disqualifications

Driver training schools and their owners, instructors, or anyone directly or indirectly involved with the school license can lose their license (suspended, revoked, denied, or not renewed) for the following reasons:

### **Criminal Convictions.**

According to state regulations, a license can be denied or revoked if an applicant or license holder has been convicted of:

- A felony, or any crime involving any of the following:
  - Violence.
  - Dishonesty or deceit.
  - Indecency or moral wrongdoing.
- Unprofessional conduct, such as false, deceptive, or misleading advertising.

### **Non-Compliance with Business Practices.**

A school or instructor license may also be denied or revoked if the school or instructor fails to meet requirements under RCW 46.82, WAC 308.108, or RCW 18.235. Reasons for disqualification include:

- Engaging in conduct that puts the safety or education of students or others at risk.
- Acting incompetently, negligently, or with malpractice, resulting in harm or risk of harm to others.
- Instructors failing to meet qualifications outlined in RCW 46.82.330(2)(a).
- Providing false information or hiding important facts when applying for, renewing, or reinstating a license.
- Failing to cooperate during investigations, audits, or inspections, including not providing requested documents or explanations.
- Allowing unlicensed individuals to operate or practice in areas requiring a license.

- Operating beyond the legal scope of the school's license.
- Misrepresenting the business or profession in any way.
- Failing to supervise staff (employees or contractors), leading to potential harm to students or others.
- Being convicted of any gross misdemeanor or felony related to the operation of the school or instruction profession.

Adhering to these regulations is critical to maintaining the school's license and ensuring a safe, professional learning environment.

## 3.1 Classroom Duration and Structure

Driver training courses must follow specific rules to ensure effective learning and meet Department of Licensing (DOL) standards.

### Enrollment and Make-Up Classes

- Enrollment Deadline: Students cannot join a traffic safety course after the third class session.
- Making Up Missed Classes:
  - Students can make up missed classes if the assignments and instruction are equivalent to what was missed.
  - Acceptable make-up options include:
    - Attending the same class or topic at a different time.
    - Completing instructor-led alternative activities (e.g., worksheets or recorded classes).
  - Students can only have up to six hours of make-up using instructor-led alternatives.
  - Make-up sessions must be completed at the school with a licensed instructor present.
  - Students must log the same amount of time as the original class (e.g., a two-hour class requires two hours of make-up time).
  - All make-up time and activities must be documented in the student's record.

### Classroom Duration Requirements

- Class Duration:
  - No class can exceed two hours and ten minutes in total accounting for two, five minute breaks.
  - Instructional time is **only** the time that active instruction is taking place (e.g., teacher-led or student-led)
- Minimum Hours: Courses must include at least 30 hours of classroom instructional time.

- Schedule:
  - Each class session must have instructional time between one and two hours long.
  - Classroom sessions cannot overlap or have mixed lessons—students in a session must be on the same lesson.

## **Course Structure Requirements**

- Classes must be scheduled over at least 30 days.
- Open enrollment or self-paced instruction is not allowed (except for make-up lessons).
- Teacher-Led Learning: At least 50% of classroom instruction must be led by a teacher. This includes in-person training, interaction between the teacher and students, and opportunities for questions and answers.
- Supervision: Students must always be supervised by a licensed instructor while in the classroom or receiving instructional credit.
- Parent/Guardian Night: There must be a designated session for parents, guardians, or employers lasting at least one hour. This can count toward the required 30 hours of student training. Provide guardians with a 50 hour log to use with their novice drivers.

## **Record-Keeping and Documentation**

Schools must document:

- Any unscheduled closures due to weather.
- Missed classes.
- Test failures that delay advancement.
- Dates of make-up sessions or transfers to different classes.

## 3.2 Behind-the-wheel Duration and Structure

Behind-the-wheel (BTW) instruction is a critical component of driver education and must follow these standards to ensure effective learning and compliance:

### **BTW Instruction Hours**

- Students must complete at least six hours of on-street BTW instruction under the direct supervision of a licensed instructor.
- Up to four hours of driving simulation may substitute for one hour of BTW instruction, with prior approval from the Department of Licensing.

### **Timing of BTW Lessons**

- BTW lessons must begin within 30 days of the start of classroom instruction.

### **Daily BTW Limits**

- Students may complete no more than one hour of BTW instruction per day.
- Instruction should match the student's skill level. For example:
  - Avoid crossing highways or advanced driving scenarios during the first lesson.
  - Students must be familiarized with the vehicle and its controls before engaging in hands-on driving.

### **Observation Requirements**

- Students must complete at least one hour of in-vehicle observation, supervised by a licensed instructor.
- Four hours of observation are recommended.
- Observation tasks must be clearly described, actively engage the student, and be documented.

## **Instructional Vehicles**

- Vehicles used for BTW instruction must be exclusively used for driver training purposes. Activities like driving through restaurants or using the radio during instruction are prohibited.

## **Student Requirements**

- Students must possess and carry a valid instruction permit or driver's license during any BTW session. Permits are not required for observation-only sessions.

## **BTW Instruction Records**

- Start and end times for each BTW session, ensuring the recorded time reflects active, hands-on driving.
- Pre- and post-lesson reviews, which must not exceed 10 minutes in total.
- A minimum of 50 minutes of active driving per hour-long BTW session.
- All observation hours, including detailed descriptions of observer tasks and engagement during the session.
- Document any absences, the reasons for missed lessons, and the completion dates of make-up sessions.
- Note any class or vehicle sessions missed due to unscheduled school closures, test failures, or holidays.
- If a school follows a flowchart that deviates from the state's curriculum timeline, approval must be documented and available for audit.

## 3.3 Required Curriculum

### Required Curriculum Standards

Driver Training Schools educating novice drivers in the instruction of traffic safety must follow the Washington Traffic Safety Education Required Curriculum Standards.

These must be clearly displayed in a place that can be seen by all customers at the driver training school. The Washington Traffic Safety Education Required Curriculum Standards contain learning outcomes for classroom and behind-the-wheel instruction. The standards provide a foundation for driver education. They identify the critical content knowledge and skills that must be taught to increase safety for all road users. They are written for -and to- the novice driver. They identify objectives that will help beginning drivers, instructors, and mentors meet licensure expectations.

The required standards are not curriculum. Curriculum involves lesson plans, textbooks, assignments, classroom activities and assessments; however, any curriculum and materials used for instruction must align to the state's Driver Education Standards to ensure all students, regardless of what school they attend, are equally prepared to meet Washington's driving expectations and responsibilities. The standards (the what of driver education) outline expectations for curriculum development (the how of teaching).

### Curriculum

It is the driver training school's responsibility to design curriculum that aligns with the standards. The Department of Licensing must review and approve a school's curriculum (lesson plans, textbooks, slideshows, learning activities, assessments, and videos) as part of the initial application process.

The curriculum must comply with RCW 46.82.420, RCW 46.82.430, WAC 308.108.150, and WAC 308.108.120 and include instruction in, but is not limited to, the following:

- The safe, lawful, and responsible operation of motor vehicles on state highways.
- Intermediate driver's license rules:
  - How to get an intermediate driver's license.
  - Passenger and driving restrictions, including penalties for breaking these rules.
  - How traffic violations and collisions affect driving privileges.
- Alcohol and drug effects on drivers:
  - The dangers of alcohol and drug use for drivers.
  - Traffic injury and death statistics related to alcohol and drug use in Washington State.
  - Current penalties for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- The importance of safely sharing the road with motorcyclists.
- How to safely share the road with bicyclists.
- Bicyclists' rights and responsibilities, as well as recommended riding procedures in common traffic situations.
- How to safely share the road with pedestrians.
- Pedestrians' rights and responsibilities in traffic.
- How to safely share the road with commercial vehicles, buses, and other large vehicles.
- Proper use of the left-hand lane to improve traffic flow and safety.
- Organ and tissue donation education provided by the Department of Licensing and Washington State's federally designated organ donation organization.
- Comprehensive final written and behind the wheel examinations.
- A parent/guardian night:
  - Instruction on the parent/guardian responsibilities and the importance of involvement with the teen driver.



- Information on intermediate license laws, restrictions, and sanctions.
- An introduction to the parent guide to teen driving.
- A questions and answers period.

The required curriculum described in RCW 46.82.420 focuses on helping new drivers develop the knowledge, skills, and awareness they need to drive safely. The training must cover, at a minimum, the following topics:

- Rules of the road
- Vehicle parts and how they work
- How to handle and control a vehicle
- Safe driving habits and behaviors
- Sharing the road with others
- Staying focused and aware while driving
- Identifying and managing hazards and risks
- Vehicle maintenance, handling malfunctions, and understanding new technology
- Handling emergencies and driving in bad conditions
- Showing respect and responsibility on the road
- Using vehicle technology systems

Each driver training school must have a written curriculum guide for instructors. This guide must be used to teach students and should include instructional methods, lesson plans, and supporting materials.

The school must also keep records that are available to the Department of Licensing (DOL) upon request. These records must include:

- Approved forms with required attachments.
- Any updates to the curriculum, which must be noted on the front of the approved curriculum.

## 3.4 Forms

### **DTS Supplemental Declaration for Online Application Form**

Use this [form](#) to provide the signatures of all owners and substantial interest holders of a new driver training school when you apply online. This form is required to be uploaded with the online school application.

### **Student Record form**

Use this [form](#) or one substantially similar that has been approved by the department to collect essential information about students within the course, including:

- Course attendance, starting, and ending dates.
- The dates and times for each session of classroom and behind the wheel instruction.
- Classroom and behind the wheel pass, fail, or incomplete information.
- The name and signature of the instructor who provided each session of classroom and behind the wheel instruction.

### **DTS Policy Agreement**

Each driver training school must have a written policy for customers that includes:

- Requirements for enrollment
- Information about student fees and refund policies
- Rules for course failures and retaking the course
- The shortest and longest time allowed to complete the course
- A rule that students under 15 years old cannot take the course
- A rule that new students cannot join after the first three classes have been completed
- Details about Washington's intermediate license rules, restrictions, and penalties. The policy must also include a section where both the parent and student sign to confirm they have received this information.

## **Curriculum Submission Form**

Use this form to cross-reference the required curriculum standards to the educational materials and lesson plans in your curriculum and submit a flow chart that indicates how the classroom and behind the wheel instruction are completed throughout the course.

## **Behind-the-wheel Instruction Log**

Use this form or one substantially similar that has been approved by the department to collect essential information about students within the course, including:

- Student name, date of birth, phone number
- Student driver license or permit number
- Drive dates with starting and ending times
- The name and signature of the instructor who provided each session of behind the wheel instruction
- Descriptions of the drive skills and maneuvers covered on each drive and feedback on student performance

## 4.1 General Requirements

### **Licenses (RCW 46.82.310)**

#### School License Requirements:

You must have a valid school license, and it must be posted before you:

- Schedule, enroll, or start teaching any students.
- Give a student a verification of enrollment.
- Begin any classroom or behind-the-wheel instruction.

#### Instructor License Requirements:

- Instructor licenses must be linked with a school to be active, they can be linked to a main location, branch or both.
- A copy of the valid license must be clearly displayed at every location where the instructor teaches.

### **Written Policy Requirements (WAC 308.108.120(2))**

Every driver training school must give customers a written policy that includes:

- Enrollment criteria (who can sign up).
- Student fees and refund policies (how much it costs and when refunds are given).
- Rules about course failures and retakes (what happens if a student fails).
- Course duration:
  - Minimum: At least 30 classroom hours, 6 behind-the-wheel (BTW) hours, and 1 observation hour.
  - Maximum: Must match the approved course schedule.
- Enrollment deadlines: No students can enroll after the third class.
- Intermediate licensing details: Information on Washington's licensing rules, restrictions, and penalties, with a place for parents to initial that they've received it.
- Age requirement: Students must be at least 15 years old to take a driver education course.

- Parent night: Information about a required parent meeting.

## **Student Records Requirements**

(WAC 308.108.120(3), WAC 308.108.160(2), & WAC 308.108.130(2))

Driver training schools must keep detailed records for each student on forms provided by the Department or similar forms approved by the Department.

### Student Records Must Include:

- Attendance records, including course start and end dates.
- Dates and times of all classroom and behind-the-wheel (BTW) sessions.
- The school branch name or license number at the top of the records.
- Progress and time spent in both classroom and BTW training.
- Performance evaluations for classroom and BTW instruction.
- Classroom training must be documented with:
  - A form provided or approved by the Department.
  - Actual dates, times, and student initials for each session.
  - The legible name and signature of the instructor who provided the training.
  - Specific labeling for simulation/ZED training and makeup sessions.
- Behind-the-wheel training must be documented with:
  - A form provided or approved by the Department.
  - Actual dates and times of instruction or observation.
  - The instructor's signature and the student's initials for each session.

### School Records Must Include:

All records must be kept at the school's main office for three years, be available for inspection, and comply with state requirements. These records must include:

- Instructor records.
- The school's written curriculum guide.
- Collision or injury reports.
- Behind-the-wheel drive schedules.

- Records of any traffic violations or collisions involving instructors.
- Student classroom and BTW instruction records, as well as completion reports.
- Vehicle-related documents, including:
  - Registration, insurance policy, title, annual safety inspection report, and maintenance records.

#### Other Records:

Schools must also maintain additional records as required by law. Refer to the School Requirements section for details.

Upon the sale or transfer of a school, the school and student records are transferred to the new owner and become the property and responsibility of the new owner. If a school goes out of business, all student records must be available or provided to the Department.

#### **No use of wireless devices during instruction**

Driving school instructors cannot use personal electronic devices, whether hands-free or not, if they distract from teaching in the car or classroom. This includes making verbal or written responses on communication devices during lessons.

When supervising a student driving, instructors are not allowed to send or receive messages on these devices. All device ring volumes, including nearby phones, must be silenced to avoid disrupting the student's learning or interaction with the instructor.

Instructors may use voice-activated GPS devices or classroom devices if they are part of an approved curriculum. Devices may also be used to report illegal activity, call for emergency help, or prevent harm to a person or property, as allowed by RCW 46.61.672.

Ignoring this rule and creating an unreasonable risk is a violation of RCW 18.235.130(4). Wireless devices may also be used during instruction to access a virtual classroom or in emergencies.

## 4.2 Reporting Requirements

### Reporting Requirements

(WAC 308.108.140 and RCW 46.82.310)

Driver training school owners must report the following to the Department:

1. Instructor Incidents: Report in writing any driving or traffic-related incidents involving a school instructor, including:

- Convictions for traffic violations.
- Traffic infractions or citations.
- Deferred prosecution agreements.
- Suspension, revocation, cancellation, or denial of driving privileges.

2. Traffic Collisions Involving Training Vehicles: Report within 24 hours any traffic collision involving a training vehicle that requires an accident report under RCW 46.52.030. Include:

- Date and time of the incident.
- Names of the instructor and students involved.
- Damage cost.
- Any injuries.

Before returning the vehicle to service, submit a vehicle inspection report to the Department.

3. Insurance Changes:

- Immediately report any changes to insurance coverage, including cancellations or expirations.
- Submit proof of continuing insurance coverage (Certificate of Insurance Liability).

4. Vehicle Updates:

- Report any new instructional vehicles in writing and include a vehicle inspection report so the Department can approve the vehicle for use.



- Report the removal of an instructional vehicle from service within 10 days.

#### 5. School Changes:

- Report in writing any changes to:
  - Officers, directors, or interest holders.
  - School or classroom locations.
  - Sale or purchase of the business.

#### 6. Licensing Updates:

- Report within 10 days any major changes affecting the school's licensing status, including:
  - Classroom relocations.
  - Curriculum, forms, or policy changes.
  - Insurance or lease updates (e.g., extensions or renewals).

## 4.3 Public Disclosure and Disciplinary Action

### Public Disclosure

The Department of Licensing (DOL) often receives requests for information about driver training schools, owners, or instructors. Here's what you should know:

- Applications: Any application completed by a potential school owner or instructor is public information.
- Files for open, ongoing, or pending investigations will not be released until:
  - The case is closed without action, or
  - An administrative or legal proceeding is completed.
- Before releasing files, the DOL will review them to ensure that withholding the information is not essential for effective law enforcement or protecting a person's privacy, as required by RCW 42.17.310(1)(d).
- A person's right to privacy is violated only if releasing the information:
  - Would be highly offensive to a reasonable person, and
  - Is not of legitimate public concern (RCW 42.17.255).

### Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action for non-compliance will follow the rules outlined in:

- RCW 46.82.350, RCW 46.82.360, RCW 46.82.370, RCW 46.82.380, RCW 46.82.285, and WAC 308.108.180.

The DOL Director may assign decision-making authority to someone else. In some cases, a settlement discussion may be offered at the Director's discretion.

## Hearing Process

The following steps outline the process for addressing complaints and issuing final decisions:

Receive Complaint: Complaints may come from:

- Customers.
- Other schools.
- Inspection or audit results.

Investigate the Complaint:

- Review the complaint.
- Conduct an investigation.

Internal Review:

- Investigation results are reviewed by the lead auditor and program manager.
- The review may involve the Assistant Attorney General (AAG).
- Outcomes of the review:
  - The case is closed, or
  - The case is forwarded for legal action.

Legal Action:

- The case is handled through the Brief Adjudicated Process or the Attorney General's Office.
- A Statement of Charges is prepared and signed by the Assistant Director.
- The Statement of Charges is mailed to the respondent by certified and regular mail.

Sanctions and Recommendations:

- The Program recommends sanctions based on:
  - Violation severity (risk model).
  - Disciplinary guidelines.

- Respondents may have the opportunity to discuss settlement options.

Final Order:

- The Director or their representative signs the final order.
- Sanctions are posted on the DOL disciplinary webpage.