



Suspended & Revoked Drivers – Overview

The suspension of driving privileges has been used for decades to address poor driving behavior. However, what was originally intended as a sanction to address poor driving behavior is now used as a mechanism to gain compliance with non-highways safety, or social non-conformance, reasons. Drivers are now commonly suspended for reasons such as bounced checks, fuel theft, truancy, vandalism, and many other non-traffic safety related violations. To best serve public safety, while using our limited resources more effectively, AAMVA's Suspended & Revoked Best Practice recommends that legislatures repeal laws requiring the suspension of driving privileges for non-highway safety related violations.

- Nearly 4 of every 10 suspended drivers were suspended for non-highway safety reasons.*
- Drivers suspended for highway safety related reasons are almost 3 times more likely to be involved in a crash than drivers suspended for social non-conformance reasons.*
- To reduce the number of suspended drivers by up to 40%, states are encouraged to repeal state laws requiring or allowing driver license suspension for non-highway safety reasons.
- All 50 states, the District of Columbia, as well as many Canadian provinces, have laws that either require or permit the courts to withdraw driving privileges for non-conformance reasons.
- The common belief is that a driver license suspension provides effective, sustainable motivation to encourage individuals to comply with court ordered or legislated mandates to avoid suspension is not supported by empirical evidence. Rather, suspended driver licenses for non-highway safety related reasons take resources from law enforcement and the legal and administrative system that could be used to keep the right drivers off the road – those that commit highway safety violations that cause fatal, injury and property damage crashes.
- 1 out of 5 traffic fatalities nationally involves a driver who is operating a motor vehicle while suspended or who has no license at all. Almost 19% of drivers suspended for highway safety related reasons are involved in a crash. Approximately 34% of drivers suspended for highway safety related reasons commit a moving violation while under suspension. These statistics support the notion that drivers suspended for social non-conformance reasons poste a comparatively lower safety risk compared to those who are suspended for driving related reasons.*

- In addition to the issue of highway safety, law enforcement and the legal and administrative system is burdened by the process of suspending and revoking licenses for social non-conformance violations. Eliminating social non-conformance violations would allow resources to be better focused on highway safety efforts.
- Some alternatives to driver license sanctioning for non-highway safety include: garnishment of wages, monetary programs, amnesty programs, and diversion programs.
- For more information, see AAMVA's 2013 Best Practices Guide to Reducing Suspended Drivers at [AAMVA - Best Practices and Model Legislation](#).
- Washington recently passed legislation eliminating most non-highway safety suspensions and they are realizing outcomes consistent with those predicted in the Best Practices Guide. Georgia has more recently passed similar legislation, but has not had enough time in implementation to evaluate results.

Relevant AAMVA Experts

Brian Ursino, Director of Law Enforcement

Brian retired from the Washington State Patrol in February 2010 after more than 30-years of service, the last five years as Assistant Chief. Brian joined AAMVA on March 1, 2010 as the Director of Law Enforcement. Brian has a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and an M.B.A. in Management and Leadership from City University in Seattle. Brian has also attended the FBI National Academy and the Kennedy School for Executives in State and Local Government at Harvard. In 2004 Brian received the Governor's Distinguished Management Leadership Award. For more information about Brian Ursino, visit <http://www.aamva.org/Law-Enforcement/>

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*Robert Eger III, Ph.D. "Enhanced Analyses of Suspended/Revoked Drivers Related to Crashes." Florida State University. 2011.

April 22, 2016