Ontario’s Approach to Graduated Licensing

Young and Novice Drivers

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## Overview

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Ontario’s **Graduated Licensing System** (GLS) was introduced in 1994:

- A **two-step process** (G1/G2) that takes a **minimum 20 months** to complete.
- Allows new drivers to **gradually build driving experience and skills**.
- Requires novice drivers to adhere to a **comprehensive set of driving restrictions** designed to **reduce their exposure to high risk driving situations**.

Ontario was the first jurisdiction in North America to introduce a comprehensive GLS program applying to both young and novice drivers.

GLS addresses over-representation of novice drivers in motor vehicle collisions:
- Among novice drivers, teenagers have consistently been at highest risk per km driven due to inexperience, attitudinal and lifestyle factors.
A two-step process that takes a minimum of 20 months to complete.

Allows new drivers to gradually acquire driving experience and skills.

**G1**
- Minimum age 16, must pass eye test and written test about the rules of the road/traffic signs
- Minimum 8 months with successful completion of Beginner Driver Education (BDE) or 12 months without
- Fully licensed accompanying driver in front seat at all times
- Zero Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)
- Cannot drive on 400-series highways or high-speed expressways
- Cannot drive between midnight and 5 a.m.
- Working seat belt for all passengers

**G2**
- G2 level granted based on G1-exit road test
- Minimum 12 months
- Zero BAC
- Working seat belt for all passengers
- If age 19 and under, passenger restrictions apply between midnight and 5 a.m. unless accompanied by a fully licensed driver in front seat or if passengers are members of immediate family

**G**
- Full driving privileges on completion of G2 road test
A two-step process that takes a minimum 24 months to complete.

Allows new drivers to gradually acquire driving experience and skills.

**M1**
- Minimum age 16, must pass an eye test and written test about the rules of the road/traffic signs
- Minimum 60 days
- Zero BAC
- Must wear an approved motorcycle helmet
- Can only ride during daylight hours
- Cannot drive on road with speed limits of 80km/hr and over (except some highways as designated)
- Cannot carry passengers

**M2**
- M2 level granted based on M1-exit road test
- Minimum 18 months with successful completion of a recognized motorcycle safety course or 22 months without course completion
- Can now ride at night and on any road
- Zero BAC
- Wear an approved helmet

**M**
- Full driving privileges on completion of M2 road test
• BDE was introduced as a component of GLS to encourage novice drivers to learn the rules of the road and acquire basic vehicle operation skills through formal instruction.

• To graduate from a Ministry-approved BDE course, novice drivers must complete 20 hours of in-class instruction, 10 hours of in-vehicle instruction and an additional 10 hours of flexible training.

• **Sept 2007:** The ministry began regulating all driving schools offering BDE in the province and compliance with provincial standards is monitored.

• **Sept 2009:** New BDE curriculum standards implemented:
  • All ministry-approved course providers offering BDE must use a curriculum that conforms to the Ministry’s BDE curriculum standards.
  • Standards include a more intensive driver education program with a focus on skills and behaviours to reduce collision risk for novice drivers, including speed control, hazard detection, distracted driving, risk assessment and decision making.

• **January 2016:** 509 ministry-approved BDE course providers at 1012 locations.
  • Almost 150,000 students take a ministry approved BDE course every year (there are approximately 300,000 G1 drivers on Ontario roads).
In recent decades, Ontario has achieved significant results in enhancing young and novice driver safety:

- Largely due to the introduction of Ontario’s GLS in 1994; and,
  - According to the last five years of available data (2009-2013), Ontario experienced a 72% decrease in the average fatality rate for young drivers aged 16 to 19 compared to the five years prior to the introduction of GLS (1989-1993).
    - In comparison, drivers aged 45-54 had an average fatality rate decrease of 62%.

- Young drivers aged 16 to 19 continue to be over-represented in motor vehicle collisions and traffic fatalities as compared with more experienced drivers.

- In 2013, teenage drivers aged 16-19 had an involvement rate in at-fault fatal collisions that was almost two times higher than drivers aged 30-59.
Young Driver Risk Profile

• **Experience**
  • Learning to drive takes time and needs extended practice in order to reach a sufficient competence level.

• **Age**
  • Cognitive, physical and emotional immaturity, as well as lifestyles associated with youth can increase crash risk and severity.
  • Propensity to take risks.

• **Gender**
  • Young men are more inclined toward risk-taking, sensation-seeking, speeding and anti-social behaviour than their female counterparts.
Need for Further Action

For the last 15 years, Ontario has been ranked either first or second in North America for road safety.....

One person injured in a drinking and driving crash every 3.8 hours

One collision every 3 minutes

One person killed every 17 hours

One person injured in a speed-related crash every 1.4 hours

One person injured every 8.8 minutes
Young Driver Fatalities & Serious Injuries

Introduction of Graduated Licencing System

Significant decreases despite 52% increase in young driver population

Between 1988 – 2013:
- Drivers 16-19 Killed ↓ 73%
- Drivers 16-19 Seriously Injured ↓ 88%

Year

Number of Fatalities

Number of Serious Injuries

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Young Drivers (16-19)

- **Fatalities**: 2012: 15, 2013: 17 (13.3% increase)
- **Hospital Admissions (Major Injuries)**: 2012: 70, 2013: 65 (7.1% decrease)
- **ER Visits (Minor Injuries)**: 2012: 869, 2013: 827 (4.8% decrease)

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Young Drivers (16-19 year olds) Killed

Over half had been drinking or were impaired by alcohol or tested positive for drugs

Almost 3 out of 4 were speeding or lost control

* Figures do not include drivers of motorcycles/mopeds, bicycles, all terrain vehicles or snow vehicles
At-Fault Fatal Collision Involvement Rate by Age Group, 2004-2013
1. Lower injury collision involvement rates among teen G2 drivers who completed BDE

Collision Involvement Rates per 10,000 Licensed Drivers

- **Fatal**
  - BDE: 1.81
  - NO_BDE: 1.82

- **Injury**
  - BDE: 166.6
  - NO_BDE: 175.1

4.9% decrease in injury rates among teen G2 drivers who completed BDE.
2. Higher HTA and CCC suspension rates among teen G2 drivers who did not complete BDE
August 1, 2010:

- **Drivers 21 years of age and younger**, regardless of licence class, must have a **zero blood alcohol concentration (BAC)** when they get behind the wheel or they face:
  - An immediate 24-hour licence suspension;
  - 30-day licence suspension; and,
  - Up to $500 in fines.

- Drivers in GLS face **escalating sanctions** *(See Appendix A/B for further details).*

September 1, 2015:

- To supplement the legislative amendments in the *Making Ontario’s Roads Safer Act, 2015*, Ontario introduced a regulatory change to add a distracted driving prohibition to the existing Novice Driver Licence Conditions.

- Young and novice drivers, who are convicted of any GLS violations, including distracted driving, will be subject to escalating licence suspensions and risk licence cancellation *(See Appendix A/c for further details).*

- This change reinforces the need for all novice drivers, regardless of age, to drive responsibly, and obey the rules of the road including the conditions of their licence class.
Province works with road safety partners to reach out directly to young drivers with:

- Stop Impaired Driving Student Awareness Tool Kit
- Take it To the Track Youth Leadership Event
- “Sweet Life Road Show”
Potential Policy Improvements

- Mandatory logged practice (i.e. number of driving hours with supervisory driver/BDE instructor)
- Extended GLS program/extended stage durations
- Integration of technology (e.g., telematics solutions)
- Improved night-time and passenger restrictions
For more information, please contact:

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Appendix A: Escalating Sanctions

Escalating Sanctions (ES)
• ES for novice drivers apply if any of the following occurrences have taken place within a five-year period:
  • Any combination of repeat violations of G1/G2/M1/M2 restrictions;
  • Convictions for individual HTA offences carrying four or more demerit points;
  • Court-ordered licence suspensions for HTA convictions that would have otherwise resulted in four or more demerit points;
  • Convictions for an offence under subsection 44.1 (3) (Zero BAC Condition) – subsection 216 (3) (Stopping for police officer) – and section 78 and 78.1 (Distracted Driving).

ES penalties for novice and hybrid drivers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st Occurrence</th>
<th>2nd Occurrence</th>
<th>3rd Occurrence</th>
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<td>30-day suspension (+$150 reinstatement fee)</td>
<td>90-day suspension (+$150 reinstatement fee)</td>
<td>Licence cancellation – Requirement to restart GLS (in the case of hybrid drivers only their novice licence is cancelled), any fees paid, credit received for BDE forfeited</td>
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Drivers convicted of driving-related offences have demerit points recorded on their records.

Demerit points stay on their record for two years from the date of the offence. The accumulation of points may lead to driver sanctioning and improvement measures.

In Ontario, novice drivers have reduced demerit point thresholds compared to fully licensed drivers.

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<tr>
<th><strong>Novice Drivers</strong></th>
<th><strong>Fully Licensed Drivers</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2-5 Points</strong></td>
<td><strong>6-8 Points</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Warning letter</td>
<td>• Warning letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6-8 Points</strong></td>
<td><strong>9-14 Points</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interview with driver improvement councillor to explain why licence should not be suspended</td>
<td>• Interview with driver improvement councillor to explain why licence should not be suspended</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Failure to attend may result in a licence suspension</td>
<td>• Failure to attend may result in a licence suspension</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>9+ Points</strong></td>
<td><strong>15+ Points</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• 60-day licence suspension</td>
<td>• 30-day licence suspension</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Possibility of two year suspension if licence is not surrendered</td>
<td>• Possibility of two year suspension if licence is not surrendered</td>
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## Appendix C:
Zero BAC & Ban on Hand-Held Devices

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<th>Novice Condition</th>
<th>Provision</th>
<th>Penalty</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>As of year 2010:</strong></td>
<td>HTA s. 44.1 (5)</td>
<td>24-hour roadside suspension; $85.00 set fine + 30-day licence suspension upon conviction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Young drivers (aged 21 &amp; under) must have a zero BAC level at all times</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>As of year 2015:</strong></td>
<td>Reg. 340/94, s. 9(3)(5)</td>
<td>$400.00 set fine and escalating sanctions upon conviction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drive — display screen visible to driver</td>
<td>HTA s. 78 and 78.1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Drive — hand-held communication/entertainment device</td>
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