

**Enhancing Child Passenger
Safety in New Jersey**

**CRAFTING, PASSING AND
IMPLEMENTING CPS
LEGISLATION**

A3121/S2026

Goal:
To make New Jersey CPS law mirror the American
Academy of Pediatrics recommendations
And
Increase fines to encourage compliance

Seat Requirements

- Under 2 years of age and less than 30 pounds must be rear facing
- Under 4 years and less than 40 pounds must be in:
 - A rear facing seat until they reach the height and weight limits of the seat
 - A forward facing seat with a five point harness
- Under 8 years and less than 57 inches must be in:
 - Forward facing seat with a five point harness until they reach the height and weight limits of the seat
 - A booster seat

Bill Language

- a. A child under the age of two years and weighing less than 30 pounds shall be secured in a rear facing child passenger restraint system, which is equipped with a five-point harness.
- b. A child under the age of four years and weighing less than 40 pounds shall be secured:
- (1) in a rear facing child passenger restraint system, which is equipped with a five-point harness, until the child outgrows the top height or top weight recommendations made by the manufacturer of the child passenger restraint system, at which point the child shall be secured in a rear seat, in a forward facing child passenger restraint system which is equipped with a five-point harness; or

Bill language cont.

- (2) in a forward facing child passenger restraint system which is equipped with a five-point harness.
- c. A child under the age of eight years and less than 57 inches in height shall be secured:
- (1) in a forward facing child passenger restraint system which is equipped with a five-point harness, until the child outgrows the top height or top weight recommendations made by the manufacturer of the child passenger restraint system, at which point the child shall be secured in a rear seat, in a booster seat; or
- (2) in a booster seat.

Bill language cont.

- d. If there are no rear seats, the child shall be secured in a child passenger restraint system or booster seat [, as described in Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard Number 213] in a front seat of a motor vehicle except that no child shall be secured in a rear facing child passenger restraint system in a front seat of any motor vehicle which is equipped with a passenger-side airbag that is not disabled or turned off.
- e. In no event shall failure to [wear] be secured in a child passenger restraint system or [to use a] booster seat be considered as contributory negligence, nor shall the failure to [wear] be secured in the child passenger restraint system or booster be admissible as evidence in the trial of any civil action.

Fine provisions

- **No less than \$50 and no more than \$75**
 - Up from \$10-\$25

- **Removed court option to waive fine if parents demonstrates that they possess a seat**
 - There were concerns that parents were bringing in outdated seats and installing them and/or purchasing a seat to show the court and then returning the seat.

Obstacles

- **Cost**
 - Legislators were concerned that the bill made child passenger seats cost prohibitive for low-income residents
- **RESPONSE**
 - We explained the many programs in place that would provide seats to low-income families and suggested that an education component would help families to identify those sources.
 - We provided a description of the different paths a parent could take to comply with the law and how much it would cost (minimum)
 - Infant carrier – convertible – booster = \$215 (over 6 years)
 - Infant carrier- three-in-one-seat = \$160 (over 2 years)
 - Convertible – three-in-one seat = \$120 (over 3 years)

Obstacles

- **Fines**
 - Legislators were concerned that the fines were punitive
- **RESPONSE**
 - We believed the increase fines expressed the seriousness of the offense and the removal of the waiver addressed concerns of misuse or nonuse. We offered the education class as an alternative that would increase education, provide a path to an affordable (or donated seat) and ensure compliance.

Implementation

- The bill was effective 3 months after passage – September 1, 2015
- Education is the focus
- No state funding for education campaign

Education by Example



Meet with Stakeholders

- HTSPAC – Highway Traffic Safety Policy Advisory Committee
- State & County Traffic Officers Associations
- State & County Chiefs of Police
- Safe kids

In the community

- **Babies R Us**
 - Employee training
 - Monthly new parent workshops
 - Annual Car seat checks
- **Car seat Checks**
 - Weekly checks
 - Special events
 - Education & Enforcement stops
- **Medical Providers**
 - Hospital Association
 - HTS

Media

- **Member publications**
- **Press Releases**
- **Social Media**
- **Advertising**
 - PBS
 - Children's cable programming

Bookmarks

THREE TIPS For a parent to

Read out of the car with an auto-reversing stop to allow the car to stop even when on the right track.

USE ONLY ONE SYSTEM TO INSTALL

There are two methods of installation—the vest or the Child Rest Anchor and Effect (C.R.A.E.) method. Both methods are considered safe and effective. However, do not combine the two methods. Always use the system and just one anchor point on the car seat. Do not use the C.R.A.E. method in a car seat that is not designed for use in a C.R.A.E. method.

MAKE SURE HARNESS STRAPS ARE TIGHT AND POSITIONED PROPERLY

If the harness straps are not tight, the child will not be held in the seat properly. The harness straps should be snug against the child's body. The harness straps should be adjusted to fit the child's shoulders when the child is sitting upright in the seat.

POSITION THE CHILD CLIP PROPERLY

The child clip should be positioned on the chest of the child. The clip should be positioned on the chest of the child and not on the shoulder or the back of the child. The clip should be positioned on the chest of the child and not on the shoulder or the back of the child.

For more information about child passenger safety, visit www.aaasafeside.com.

AAA.COM/SAFESIDEAIDS

STAY SAFE IN THE CAR 4 STEPS FOR KIDS

It's essential to use proper and safe car seat-restraint system and belts. Here are 4 steps to use for best results.

REAR-FACING

Use the back seat from birth until age 2 AND 20 pounds. When you still require the high and weight limits of the child seat, use a convertible and not a booster seat or single from the beginning.

FORWARD-FACING

Use the back seat from birth until age 2 and 20 pounds. Once the child is 2 years old or older, use the forward-facing car seat with a harness until the child reaches the height and weight limits of the child seat, use a convertible and not a booster seat or single from the beginning.

BOOSTER SEATS

Use in the back seat from about age 4 until the child reaches the height and weight limits of the booster seat. Use a convertible and not a booster seat or single from the beginning.

SEAT BELTS

Children can wear their seat belts when they are 4'11" (57 inches) tall and 80 lbs. (36 kg) or more when the booster seat is not used. Use a convertible and not a booster seat or single from the beginning.

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Questions?

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