
Transportation Committee

HB 1822

Brief Description: Establishing a driver work zone and first responder safety course requirement.

Sponsors: Representatives Low, Stearns, Berry, Walen, Fosse, Ramel, Barkis, Salahuddin, Richards and Zahn.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires that an applicant for a new driver's license under the age of 26 to pass an online course approved by the Department of Licensing on driver work zone and first responder safety.
- Requires that the Washington Traffic Safety Commission contract with a provider of an online driver work zone and first responder safety course to host an online course that satisfies the online course requirement, with the online course to be made available at no cost to Washington residents between the ages of 15 and 25.

Hearing Date: 2/10/25

Staff: Jennifer Harris (786-7143).

Background:

To be eligible to obtain a driver's license, a person under the age of 18 must complete a driver training education course offered by a private driver training school licensed by the Department of Licensing (DOL) or by a school district.

Traffic safety education courses offered by a private driver training school for individuals under the age of 18 must include:

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1. at least 30 hours of classroom instruction;
2. at least 6 hours of behind-the-wheel instruction (or 5 or more hours of behind-the-wheel instruction and 4 or more hours of driving simulation); and
3. one or more hours of in-vehicle driver observation.

Traffic safety education courses offered by school districts must include a minimum of:

1. 30 hours of classroom instruction;
2. 6 hours of driving experience; and
3. 4 hours of driving observation times.

The DOL and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction maintain a required curriculum for approved private driver training schools and school districts that operate a driver training education program. The required curriculum includes content to develop knowledge, skills, and awareness. It is required to cover: (1) rules of the road; (2) vehicle components; (3) vehicle handling; (4) driver behavior; (5) sharing the road; (6) attention and perception; (7) hazard and risk management; (8) vehicle maintenance, malfunctions, and technology; (9) managing emergencies and adverse conditions; (10) respect and responsibility; and (11) vehicle technology systems.

The DOL may waive the driver training education course requirement if an applicant was licensed to drive a motor vehicle outside the state and provides proof that he or she completed driver education equivalent to Washington's education requirement.

An applicant for a driver's license 18 years of age or older must successfully pass a driver licensing exam, but is not required to complete a driver training education course to be eligible for a license.

Summary of Bill:

An applicant for a new driver's license under the age of 26 must pass an online course approved by the DOL on driver work zone and first responder safety. A "new driver's license" is defined as a driver's license issued to a driver who has not previously been issued a driver's license in Washington. The DOL may waive this requirement if the DOL finds that the online driver work zone and first responder safety course is unavailable at the time of application.

The Washington Traffic Safety Commission is required to contract with a provider of an online driver work zone and first responder safety course to host an online course that satisfies this course requirement. The course is to be made available at no cost to Washington residents between the ages of 15 and 25.

The revenue generated from the deployment of speed safety camera systems by the Washington State Department of Transportation to be used for the purposes of traffic safety, including driver training education, may be used to fund the required online work zone and first responder safety course.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on January 1, 2026.