
SENATE BILL 5195

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Senator Benton

Read first time 01/15/15. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 AN ACT Relating to driver's license and instruction permit
2 examination fees; amending RCW 46.20.055 and 46.20.120; and providing
3 an effective date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 46.20.055 and 2012 c 80 s 5 are each amended to read
6 as follows:

7 (1) **Driver's instruction permit.** The department may issue a
8 driver's instruction permit with or without a photograph to an
9 applicant who has successfully passed all parts of the examination
10 other than the driving test, provided the information required by RCW
11 46.20.091, paid an application and examination fee of twenty-five
12 dollars if the department administers the written examination or an
13 application fee of twelve dollars if the written examination is
14 administered by a driver training school or school district or is
15 otherwise waived as outlined in subsection (2) of this section, and
16 meets the following requirements:

17 (a) Is at least fifteen and one-half years of age; or

18 (b) Is at least fifteen years of age and:

19 (i) Has submitted a proper application; and

20 (ii) Is enrolled in a traffic safety education program offered,
21 approved, and accredited by the superintendent of public instruction

1 or offered by a driver training school licensed and inspected by the
2 department of licensing under chapter 46.82 RCW, that includes
3 practice driving.

4 (2) **Waiver of written examination for instruction permit.** The
5 department may waive the written examination, if, at the time of
6 application, an applicant is enrolled in:

7 (a) A traffic safety education course as defined by RCW
8 28A.220.020(2); or

9 (b) A course of instruction offered by a licensed driver training
10 school as defined by RCW 46.82.280.

11 The department may require proof of registration in such a course
12 as it deems necessary.

13 (3) **Effect of instruction permit.** A person holding a driver's
14 instruction permit may drive a motor vehicle, other than a
15 motorcycle, upon the public highways if:

16 (a) The person has immediate possession of the permit;

17 (b) The person is not using a wireless communications device,
18 unless the person is using the device to report illegal activity,
19 summon medical or other emergency help, or prevent injury to a person
20 or property; and

21 (c) An approved instructor, or a licensed driver with at least
22 five years of driving experience, occupies the seat beside the
23 driver.

24 (4) **Term of instruction permit.** A driver's instruction permit is
25 valid for one year from the date of issue.

26 (a) The department may issue one additional one-year permit.

27 (b) The department may issue a third driver's permit if it finds
28 after an investigation that the permittee is diligently seeking to
29 improve driving proficiency.

30 (c) A person applying for an additional instruction permit must
31 submit the application to the department in person and pay an
32 application fee of twenty-five dollars for each issuance.

33 **Sec. 2.** RCW 46.20.120 and 2012 c 80 s 7 are each amended to read
34 as follows:

35 An applicant for a new or renewed driver's license must
36 successfully pass a driver licensing examination to qualify for a
37 driver's license. The department must ensure that examinations are
38 given at places and times reasonably available to the people of this
39 state. If the department does not administer driver licensing

1 examinations as a routine part of its licensing services within a
2 department region because adequate testing sites are provided by
3 driver training schools or school districts within that region, the
4 department shall, at a minimum, administer driver licensing
5 examinations by appointment to applicants eighteen years of age and
6 older in at least one licensing office within that region.

7 (1) **Waiver.** The department may waive:

8 (a) All or any part of the examination of any person applying for
9 the renewal of a driver's license unless the department determines
10 that the applicant is not qualified to hold a driver's license under
11 this title; or

12 (b) All or any part of the examination involving operating a
13 motor vehicle if the applicant:

14 (i) Surrenders a valid driver's license issued by the person's
15 previous home state; or

16 (ii) Provides for verification a valid driver's license issued by
17 a foreign driver licensing jurisdiction with which the department has
18 an informal agreement under RCW 46.20.125; and

19 (iii) Is otherwise qualified to be licensed.

20 (2) **Fee.** Each applicant for a new license must pay an application
21 and examination fee of thirty-five dollars if the department
22 administers the driver licensing examination or an application fee of
23 twelve dollars if either the written portion or skills portion, or
24 both, of the driver licensing examination is administered by a driver
25 training school or school district.

26 (a) The application and examination fee is in addition to the fee
27 charged for issuance of the license.

28 (b) "New license" means a license issued to a driver:

29 (i) Who has not been previously licensed in this state; or

30 (ii) Whose last previous Washington license has been expired for
31 more than six years.

32 (3) An application for driver's license renewal may be submitted
33 by means of:

34 (a) Personal appearance before the department; or

35 (b) Mail or electronic commerce, if permitted by rule of the
36 department and if the applicant did not renew his or her license by
37 mail or by electronic commerce when it last expired.

38 (4) A person whose license expired or will expire while he or she
39 is living outside the state, may:

1 (a) Apply to the department to extend the validity of his or her
2 license for no more than twelve months. If the person establishes to
3 the department's satisfaction that he or she is unable to return to
4 Washington before the date his or her license expires, the department
5 shall extend the person's license. The department may grant
6 consecutive extensions, but in no event may the cumulative total of
7 extensions exceed twelve months. An extension granted under this
8 section does not change the expiration date of the license for
9 purposes of RCW 46.20.181. The department shall charge a fee of five
10 dollars for each license extension;

11 (b) Apply to the department to renew his or her license by mail
12 or, if permitted by rule of the department, by electronic commerce
13 even if subsection (3)(b) of this section would not otherwise allow
14 renewal by that means. If the person establishes to the department's
15 satisfaction that he or she is unable to return to Washington within
16 twelve months of the date that his or her license expires, the
17 department shall renew the person's license by mail or, if permitted
18 by rule of the department, by electronic commerce.

19 (5) If a qualified person submits an application for renewal
20 under subsection (3)(b) or (4)(b) of this section, he or she is not
21 required to pass an examination nor provide an updated photograph. A
22 license renewed by mail or by electronic commerce that does not
23 include a photograph of the licensee must be labeled "not valid for
24 identification purposes."

25 (6) Driver training schools licensed by the department under
26 chapter 46.82 RCW may administer the portions of the driver licensing
27 examination that test the applicant's knowledge of traffic laws and
28 ability to safely operate a motor vehicle.

29 (7) School districts that offer a traffic safety education
30 program under chapter 28A.220 RCW may administer the portions of the
31 driver licensing examination that test the applicant's knowledge of
32 traffic laws and ability to safely operate a motor vehicle.

33 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act takes effect January 1, 2016.

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