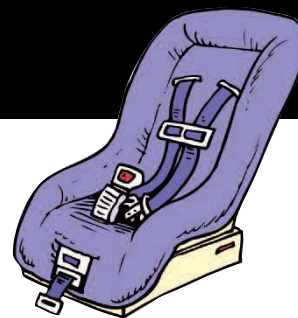


THINK

update on new child car seat regulations

Child Restraints – New Law with some exemptions for Taxis & PHVs



New regulations governing the use of child car seats came into force on **18 September 2006**.

Stephen Ladyman, Road Safety Minister said:



"Most people make sure that children use some kind of restraint when traveling on the road, but it is vitally important to use the right one; and not to use an adult belt before the child is big enough.

"Small children need the protection that baby seats and child seats are designed to provide. Seat belts are designed for adults. Children who have grown out of child seats still need to use booster seats and booster cushions.

"We estimate that these changes could prevent over 2000 child deaths or injuries each year."

From 18 September 2006 in cars, vans and goods vehicles

	Front seat	Rear seat	Who is Responsible?	In addition, the revised regulations also say that rear-facing baby seats MUST NOT be used in a seat protected by a frontal air-bag unless the air-bag has been deactivated manually or automatically.
Driver	Seat belt MUST be worn if available.		Driver	<p>* Children under 3 years MUST use the child restraint appropriate for their weight in all cars, vans and other goods vehicles, with the single exception for the rear of taxis. They cannot travel otherwise. This means for example that they may not travel in cars, vans or goods vehicles which do not have seat belts installed.</p> <p>** Examples. A 7 year old who is 140 cms tall is over the height for a child restraint and may use an adult seat belt. A 12 year old who is 130 cms tall is over the age threshold and therefore may use an adult belt.</p> <p>*** If no seat belts are fitted in the front, then children under 135 cms in height (who are also under 12 years of age) cannot travel in the front.</p>
Child up to 3 years*	Correct child restraint MUST be used.*	Correct child restraint MUST be used*. If one is not available in a taxi, may travel unrestrained.	Driver	
Child from 3rd birthday up to 135cms in height (approx 4'5") (or 12th birthday whichever they reach first)**	Correct child restraint MUST be used.***	Where seat belts fitted, correct child restraint MUST be used. Must use adult belt if the correct child restraint is not available: - in a licensed taxi / private hire vehicle; or - for a short distance for reason of unexpected necessity; or - two occupied child restraints prevent fitment of a third. A child 3 and over may travel unrestrained in the rear seat of a vehicle if seat belts are not available.	Driver	
Child over 1.35 metres (approx 4ft 5ins in height) or 12 or 13 years	Seat belt MUST be worn if available.	Seat belt MUST be worn if available.	Driver	
Adult passengers (i.e. 14 years and over)	Seat belt MUST be worn if available.	Seat belt MUST be worn if available.	Passenger	

In **buses and coaches (including minibuses)**, seated passengers aged 14 years and above will have to use seat belts where they are fitted. Regulations requiring children 3 years to 13 years to use seat belts (or child restraints if they are available) in these vehicles will be brought forward as soon as practicable. The regulations will not include any obligation for anyone to provide child restraints in these vehicles. Bus and coach (including minibus) operators need to notify their passengers that seat belt wearing is compulsory.

Exemptions

Three exceptions allow children 3 years to 135 cms in height to travel in the rear and use an adult belt:

in a licensed taxi / private hire vehicle, if the right child restraint is not available; or

for unexpected necessity over a short distance, if the right child restraint is not available; or

where two occupied child seats in the rear prevent the fitment of a third child seat.

Children under 3 years may travel in the rear of a taxi unrestrained if no child restraint is available.



Further clarification was gained by Eddie Townson from The Department for Transport: -

Could you confirm that for the purpose of child seatbelt law that Licensed Private Hire Vehicles (Licensed Minicabs) would be treated as Taxis.

Thanks

Eddie Townson Chairman Private Hire Board

The answer from Dept for Transport is that we are exempt in regard to child seat belt law, as follows:

Thank you for your enquiry.

I can confirm that taxis, private hire vehicles and mini cabs will not have to provide child restraints under the new rules. The reason being is that it would not be practical for them to carry various different types & sizes of child restraints.

I hope this helps.

Terry Deere Dept for Transport Road User Safety Branch 2



Department for Transport