

ROAD RULES



Child Restraints

Changes have been made to the road rules about child restraints and there will be further changes.

From 30 November 2010, children:

- aged four years to less than the age of seven must be restrained in either an approved forward facing child restraint with an inbuilt harness or an approved booster seat restrained by a correctly adjusted and fastened seatbelt.

Children aged less than four years of age are already required to wear an approved child restraint that is properly fastened and adjusted when travelling in a car for improved safety. The type of restraint will depend on the age of the child as follows:

- **under the age of six months:** to be restrained in an approved rearward facing child restraint (e.g. infant capsule)
- **from six months to less than the age of four:** to be restrained in either an approved rearward facing child restraint or an approved forward facing child restraint with inbuilt harness (e.g. child safety seat)

There are also new laws about where children can sit in vehicles.

- If a car has two or more rows of seats, then children under four years must not travel in the front seat.
- If all seats, other than the front seats, are being used by children under seven years, children aged between four and six years (inclusive) may travel in the front seat, provided they use an approved child restraint or booster seat.

Penalty

The penalty for failing to ensure a child aged under 16 years wears a child restraint or seat belt is 3 demerit points and a \$350 fine.

DIER also recommends

That you have restraints fitted by an experienced child restraint fitter.

What you have to do

To comply with the new child restraint rules you have to:

- know which is the correct child restraint(s) to use; and
- ensure that each child passenger is wearing a properly fitted and fastened approved child restraint suitable for their age every time you drive a car.

Further advice on appropriate child restraints and fitting services is available from organisations such as Kidsafe and RACT or check your telephone or business directory for local providers.

Road safety reasons

- On average, nearly 38 children under the age of seven are injured or killed as passengers in vehicles on Tasmanian roads each year.
- Parents are generally moving their children into adult seatbelts from about the age of five and half years - research suggests this is simply too early.
- Children up to seven years are at least four times more likely to sustain a head injury in a crash when sitting in an adult seatbelt only.
- Other research shows seating children aged four to seven years old in an appropriate booster seat reduces their risk of injury in a crash by almost 60 per cent, compared to if they were sitting in an adult seatbelt without a booster seat.

Exemptions

Taxi drivers are exempt from the above rules if there is no child restraint available in the taxi. However, taxi drivers will be responsible for ensuring a child aged 1 year to less than 16 years wears an available seat belt to the best extent possible given the height and weight of the child, if there is no available child restraint. Parents are encouraged to use their own restraints in taxis where possible..

CONTACT DETAILS

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