

Ohio Public Safety

Fact Sheet



One or Two Students for In-car Instruction

Two students are permitted in a car with an instructor during in-car driver instruction training. This move is being authorized by the Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS), which assumed oversight of driver education from the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), as a result of House Bill 407 from the 124th General Assembly.

Under the new rule, driving schools are allowed to have two students during in-car instruction; one student driving, and one student observing. Observation time does not count toward the eight hours of required driving time under the graduated driver license (GDL) for each student. Under the old rule, two students were only permitted to be in the car for brief periods of time when picking up or dropping off one of the students.

Schools will benefit from this new two-student rule because they will have the

flexibility of providing private instruction or semi-private instruction to students. Students will also benefit by being in the car observing during another student's instructional driving time.

House Bill 407 allowed for one state agency (ODPS) to oversee driver training, rather than two agencies. This is allowing for driver education to be more uniform throughout the state. ODPS recognized the need to promulgate new driver training rules in order to address the needs of both school districts and commercial driving schools. It is important to note, however, that House Bill 407 included language stating that driver education programs offered for credit by school districts would remain under ODE rules until December 31, 2003.



One or Two Students for In-car Instruction continued

Ohio Administrative Code
4501-7-10 Training required for the
operation of motor vehicles other
than commercial motor vehicles.

(9) No more than two students may
be in a vehicle while behind-the-
wheel instruction is being given. No
credit for the hours of required be-
hind-the-wheel instruction shall be
given to a student who is not driving.

The option for two minors and
one adult in the vehicle can:

- Minimize sexual harassment situations. Alleviates the concern of some parents about having their minor child alone with an adult. Addresses instructor concerns about being isolated in a vehicle with minor students.
- Enhances the safety of the instructor and the students.
- Improves the learning environment for students who are interactive learners, visual learners, and auditory learners.
- Doubles student learning time with the added observation time.
- Calming effect with some students when there is a peer in the car.
- Can teach students how to be responsible passengers.
- Instructors can make effective use of observation time to teach observation and decision-making skills, map reading and practice navigating, etc.
- Schools, parents, students and instructors have a choice about conducting a lesson with one or two students in the vehicle.
- Allows the students to hear the instructions twice, once behind-the-wheel and again when watching the other driver. This repetition allows students to concentrate only on instructions while they are watching the other student drive, which can be better than doing both driving and listening to instructions at the same time.
- Allows the students to have a break during the lesson while the other student is driving.
- Allows students to learn from each other, which research has shown to be a more positive teaching method.
- Students living near each other could be scheduled together to improve logistics, planning, and convenience. Where twins

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- are being licensed, they could be scheduled together.
- Many students prefer to be scheduled with another student as they can learn a great deal from the other person's mistakes and the instructor's coaching of their driving partner.
- It has been standard practice in public school driver education nationwide for the past 30 to 40 years to schedule and conduct behind-the-wheel instruction with 2-3 students in the car during each lesson. Students benefit by learning from each other and having additional observation time.
- Additional students in the vehicle provide non-driving time for students during 2 to 4 hour sessions. This allows for mental processing and soaking time.
- Provides an opportunity for schools to plan routes that include highway, interstate, metropolitan traffic and exposure to varying driving environments that may be less likely achieved with one student or

- shorter lesson times.
- Students with learning disabilities, social anxiety issues, or those in need of individualized and private instruction can still receive one-on-one training.

Private instruction is still an option for all that choose.