

New California Car Seat Law

* EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2017 *

Children under 2-years of age must ride in rear-facing car seats unless they weigh 40 pounds or more, or are 40 inches tall or more. They must ride in the back seat.



Current Law

Children under age 8 or 4'9" tall must ride in a car seat or booster in the back seat.

Children age 8 or older, or who are 4'9" or taller, may use the vehicle seat belt if it fits properly with the lap belt low on the hips, touching the upper thighs, and the shoulder belt crossing the center of the chest. If children are not tall enough for proper belt fit, they must ride in a booster or car seat.

EVERYONE IN THE CAR MUST BE PROPERLY BUCKLED UP.

Fines and Penalties

For each child under 16 who is not properly secured, parents (if in the car) or drivers can be fined more than \$500 and get a point on their driving records.

Fact: Most children will outgrow an infant carrier before their first birthday and will need to be moved to a rear-facing convertible seat with a higher weight and height limit.

Fact: Children's head, neck and spine are best supported by a rear-facing car seat, decreasing the risk of death or serious injury during a crash.

Fact: When an older child is rear-facing it is normal for his or her legs to touch the vehicle seat. Children are very flexible and will find a comfortable position, often with their legs crossed. The risk of leg injury for a rear-facing child during a crash is minimal. The risk of severe neck injury for a young child facing forward during a crash is high.

Fact: The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children ride rear-facing in a convertible seat to the highest weight or height allowed by the car seat manufacturer.