

**Child Car Seat Requirements**

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Jake Fitisemanu**

Senate Sponsor:

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**LONG TITLE****General Description:**

This bill addresses child restraint device requirements.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- establishes specific requirements for the type of child restraint device used based on a child's age and size; and
- requires children younger than 13 years old to be transported in the rear seat of a motor vehicle when possible.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

None

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

## AMENDS:

**41-6a-1803**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 351

**41-6a-1805**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2018, Chapter 320

## ENACTS:

**41-6a-1807**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

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*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

Section 1. Section **41-6a-1803** is amended to read:

**41-6a-1803 . Driver and passengers -- Seat belt or child restraint device required.**

[(1)(a) Except as provided in Subsection (1)(e), the operator of a motor vehicle operated on a highway shall:]

[(i) wear a properly adjusted and fastened safety belt;]

[(ii) provide for the protection of each person younger than eight years old by using a child restraint device to restrain each person in the manner prescribed by the

- 31 manufacturer of the device; and]
- 32 [(iii) provide for the protection of each person that is at least eight years old and no  
33 less than 16 years old by securing, or causing to be secured, a properly adjusted  
34 and fastened safety belt on each person.]
- 35 [(b) Notwithstanding the requirement under Subsection (1)(a)(ii), a child under eight  
36 years old who is 57 inches tall or taller:]
- 37 [(i) is exempt from the requirement in Subsection (1)(a)(ii) to be in a child restraint  
38 device; and]
- 39 [(ii) shall use a properly adjusted and fastened safety belt as required in Subsection  
40 (1)(a)(iii).]
- 41 [(c) An adult passenger who is utilizing transportation network services described in  
42 Section 13-51-102 or a taxicab described in Section 53-3-102 shall:]
- 43 [(i) provide for the protection of each person younger than eight years old who is  
44 under the adult's supervision by using a child restraint device to restrain the person  
45 in the manner prescribed by the manufacturer of the device; and]
- 46 [(ii) provide for the protection of each person who is under the adult's supervision  
47 and is at least eight years old and no less than 16 years old by securing, or causing  
48 to be secured, a properly adjusted and fastened safety belt on the person.]
- 49 (1)(a) Except as provided in Subsection (1)(b), the operator of a motor vehicle operated  
50 on a highway shall:
- 51 (i) wear a properly adjusted and fastened safety belt; and
- 52 (ii) provide for the protection of each individual younger than 16 years old by  
53 complying with the child restraint and safety belt requirements described in  
54 Section 41-6a-1807.
- 55 (b) A passenger that is 18 years old or older who is a passenger and using a  
56 transportation network service as described in Section 13-51-102 or a taxicab  
57 described in Section 53-3-102 shall:
- 58 (i) provide for the protection of each individual who is under the adult's supervision  
59 and is younger than eight years old by using a child restraint device as described  
60 in Section 41-6a-1807 to restrain the individual in the manner prescribed by the  
61 manufacturer of the device; and
- 62 (ii) provide for the protection of each individual who is under the adult's supervision  
63 and is eight years old or older and younger than 16 years old by securing, or  
64 causing to be secured, a properly adjusted and fastened safety belt on the

65 individual.

66 (2) ~~[A person-]~~ An individual 16 years old or older who is a passenger in a motor vehicle  
67 operated on a highway shall wear a properly adjusted and fastened safety belt.

68 (3) If more than one ~~[person is-]~~ individual is in violation of Subsection (1) by not using a  
69 child restraint device or wearing a safety belt~~[in violation of Subsection (1)], it is [~~  
70 ~~considered-]~~only one offense, and the driver may receive only one citation for that  
71 offense.

72 Section 2. Section **41-6a-1805** is amended to read:

73 **41-6a-1805 . Penalty for violation.**

74 (1)(a) A person who violates Section 41-6a-1803 or Section 41-6a-1807 is guilty of an  
75 infraction and shall be fined a maximum of \$45.

76 (b) Until July 1, 2018, a peace officer may not issue a citation to an individual for a  
77 violation of Section 41-6a-1803 if the person has not previously been warned for a  
78 violation of Section 41-6a-1803 but shall issue the individual a warning informing  
79 the individual that operating or being a passenger in a vehicle without wearing a  
80 properly adjusted and fastened safety belt is prohibited.

81 (c) The court shall waive all of the fine for a first violation of Subsection  
82 41-6a-1803(1)(a)(ii) if the person submits proof of acquisition, rental, or purchase of  
83 a child restraint device.

84 (2) Points for a motor vehicle reportable violation, as defined under Section 53-3-102, may  
85 not be assessed against a person for a violation of Section 41-6a-1803 or Section  
86 41-6a-1807.

87 Section 3. Section **41-6a-1807** is enacted to read:

88 **41-6a-1807 . Child restraint device requirements.**

89 (1) An operator shall restrain a child who is younger than two years old in a rear-facing  
90 child restraint system that complies with all applicable federal rules until the child  
91 reaches the weight or height limit of the child restraint system set by the manufacturer.

92 (2) An operator shall restrain a child in a forward-facing child restraint system with an  
93 internal harness until the child reaches the weight or height limit set by the manufacturer  
94 of the child restraint system if:

95 (a) the child is two years old or older; or

96 (b) the child has reached the rear-facing weight or height limit as described by the  
97 manufacturer of the child restraint system.

98 (3) An operator shall restrain a child in a belt-positioning child booster seat, secured with a

- 99 vehicle's lap-shoulder safety belt, in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions if:  
100 (a) the child is four years old or older; or  
101 (b) the child has reached the forward-facing weight and height limits as described by the  
102 manufacturer of the child restraint system.
- 103 (4) An operator shall restrain a child with the motor vehicle's adult safety belt adjusted and  
104 fastened around the child's body to fit correctly if:  
105 (a) the child is nine years old or older; or  
106 (b) the child has reached the weight or height limit described by the manufacturer of a  
107 child restraint system or belt-positioning child booster seat.
- 108 (5) For purposes of Subsection (4), the adult safety belt fits correctly if:  
109 (a) the child sits all the way back against the vehicle seat;  
110 (b) the child's knees bend over the edge of the vehicle seat;  
111 (c) the safety belt fits snugly across the child's thighs and lower hips, and not the child's  
112 abdomen; and  
113 (d) the shoulder strap snugly crosses the center of the child's chest and not the child's  
114 neck.
- 115 (6) An operator shall transport a child who is younger than 13 years old in the rear seat of a  
116 motor vehicle, when available, in a properly used child restraint system, belt-positioning  
117 child booster seat, or adult safety belt that is in accordance with all applicable federal  
118 rules.
- 119 (7) A child who because of age, height, or weight can be placed in more than one safety  
120 category as described in this section shall be placed in the more protective category.

121 **Section 4. Effective Date.**

122 This bill takes effect on May 6, 2026.