

Department of Finance and Administration

Legislative Impact Statement

Bill: SB49

As Engrossed: 3/25/2015

Bill Subtitle: TO ENACT THE ARKANSAS TEEN DRIVER AND PARENTAL EDUCATION ACT OF 2015.

Basic Change : Sponsor: Sen. Irvin

This bill as engrossed enacts the Arkansas Teen Driver and Parental Education Act of 2015. The bill makes the Arkansas State Police (ASP) the lead governmental agency for testing for drivers licenses and providing information about obtaining drivers licenses and sets out other duties for the ASP to improve its official website, provide information including a checklist for obtaining graduated drivers licenses, update the drivers manual and file a report with the cochairs of the Legislative Council and the Director of the Bureau of Legislative Research within 180 days of the effective date of this act.

Currently, an applicant for an Arkansas driver's license that has not previously been licensed in another jurisdiction must pass a written examination regarding traffic laws, be issued an instruction permit at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of application for the license, and pass the skills portion of the examination. An instruction permit is issued to an individual at least 14 years of age after passage of the written portion of the driving exam and entitles the individual to operate a motor vehicle only if accompanied by a licensed driver of at least 21 years of age. This permit is for 6 months and may be renewed for another 6 months. This bill as engrossed changes the term of the instruction permit to twelve months. In addition, it provides that the holder of an instruction permit who has held the permit for 6 months and is at least 16 years of age and passed both the written test and the driving test is no longer subject to the restriction of being accompanied by a driver of at least 21 years of age.

Also, the bill clarifies the law that a restriction of driving with an adult driver over 21 years of age is required for a noncommercial driver between 16 and 18 years of age who has not possessed a restricted license, an instruction permit, or a combination of both a restricted license and an instruction permit for a period of 6 months. Current practice is that instruction permits are issued by the Arkansas State Police, not the Office of Driver Services. This bill will correct the current law.

Revenue Impact :

There is no revenue impact if this bill is passed.

Taxpayer Impact :

The holder of an instruction permit who has held the permit for 6 months and is at least 16 years of age and passed both the written test and the driving test is no longer subject to the restriction of being accompanied by a driver of at least 21 years of age.

Resources Required :

Minimum programming is required if this bill is passed. No other resources are required.

Time Required :

No additional time is required to implement this bill.

Procedural Changes :

No procedural changes are required.

Legal Analysis :

SB49 as Engrossed: H3/25/15 incorporates House Amendment No. 1. This amendment clarifies that DFA may issue an intermediate driver's license to drivers aged 16 to 18 years of age after those individuals have possessed an instruction permit, a restricted driver's license, or a combination both items for at least six months and completed all other examination requirements. This amendment addresses concerns raised by DFA.