

Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to present to you today.

In the State of NH there are about 60 Driver Education schools that train roughly 15,000 students per year.

We are mostly small businesses ranging in size from single person operations, to family businesses, to large, multi-location, multi-employee schools, with a few actual High School programs.

Driver Education under normal circumstances consists of;

- 30 hours of classroom time, up to 2 hour blocks, no more than 3 times per week.
- 10 hours of behind the wheel instruction, spread throughout the class session,
- 6 hour requirement to observe another student driving.

Like our public school systems, Driver Education classes were in progress when this pandemic hit our country. Per the Governor's Emergency order #18, Driver Education classroom time was permitted to continue using a remote platform like our public schools. Many schools are using zoom to ensure face to face interaction and conversation to keep our students engaged in the lesson. The observation requirement was temporarily allowed to be completed and certified by a parent and the behind the wheel portion was completely suspended.

At the moment our schools are in a wide range of positions. Some have shut down completely due to health concerns, some have completed their current 30 hour classroom sessions through remote learning and some have chosen to move forward, beginning new classes with classroom sessions via remote learning. All have a backlog of student driving hours that are now in limbo.

Driver Education in NH is designed as a 3 step approach with, class, lab and practice. Students attend a class and learn material, review that material in the car, similar to the lab portion of a science class, and then practice those new skills with a parent. By suspending driving until later we have temporarily interrupted that system. It's a sustainable approach for the short term problem, but not a long term solution that will still produce safe drivers.

Like other businesses, we are proposing a phased in approach to get back to work.

The first phase would, allow the behind the wheel portion of the program to resume, to continue parent certified observation and classroom on a remote learning platform.

Phase 1 Things to consider and recommend:

- Instructors will be responsible for ensuring safe practices as it relates to hygiene, disinfection and illness policies and adhere to the Universal Guidelines as laid out in Stay at Home 2.0.
- Instructors and students will wash their hands before entering the car or use hand sanitizer.
- Students will not congregate while waiting to begin a driving lesson. They should stay in their car until the instructor is ready for them and the previous student has left.
- Before each drive, car surfaces will be disinfected to include:
 - Door handles
 - All switches and instruments

- Steering wheel and steering column adjustments
- Gear shift, emergency brake and its button/lever
- Rear view mirror and adjustment
- Seatbelt straps, buckles and release latches
- Seat controls, head restraints, fuel door release lever
- Keys and key fob
- Fresh air should be coming into the car consistently during the drive using open windows, the heater or air conditioning systems.
- Air recirculation should not be turned on.
- Instructors and students will wear a face covering at all times while conducting behind the wheel training.
- Only student driver and instructor will be allowed in the car.
- Instructors will allow cleaning time between student drives.
- Instructors will clean the car as the student watches so they are comfortable they are entering a safe environment.
- Instructors will monitor their own health and cancel drives as needed, if symptoms include:
 - Fever of 100.4 or above.
 - Respiratory symptoms such as runny nose, sore throat, cough, or shortness of breath.
 - Flu-like symptoms such as muscle aches, chills and severe fatigue.
 - Changes in a person's sense of taste or smell.
- Instructors will monitor their temperature daily before beginning lessons.
- Students will notify instructors as early as possible should they not be able to drive and instructors will have a policy in place for when a student can resume driving if/when they are ill.
- Before each drive, students will be asked health screening questions as outlined in Universal Guidelines.
 - Have you returned from international or domestic travel via bus, train or airline within the last 14 days?
 - Have you had contact with anyone with confirmed or suspected of having, COVID-19 in the last 14 days?
 - Have you had any of the following symptoms in the past 72 hours?
 - Feeling feverish: feeling flushed, having chills, or otherwise like you might have fever even if your temperature is normal?
 - Cough, sore throat, runny nose/sneezing, or shortness of breath?
 - Two or more of these other signs of illness not due to a chronic medical condition: fatigue, muscle aches, joint aches, headache?
 - Loss of taste or smell?

Although not ideal, phase 1 will get students back on the path of getting their licenses and allow Driver Education businesses to get back to work.

Phase 2

This phase will add some flexibility as we anticipate disruptions to education in the fall. Phase 2 would allow behind the wheel instruction to continue, one on one only, allow parent certified observation to continue, and allow for the option to either continue class on a remote platform or to get students back into a classroom at a level that matches the Governor's restriction on the number of people who can gather socially.

In this phase, classes and instruction can resume to a somewhat normal condition, but with the option to pivot back quickly should another outbreak occur.

Classroom can resume under the following conditions:

- Hand sanitizer and wipes must be available.
- Students will be encouraged to social distance and/or wear face coverings depending on the size of the space.
- Students will be discouraged from early arrivals.
- Classroom activities altered as needed for distancing.
- Before and after class every common surface students/teachers may touch to be disinfected to include:
 - Tables, chairs, desks, door handles.
 - Light switches, computer, mouse.
 - Bathrooms if possible.

As we move into phase 2, revisit the then current recommendations regarding face coverings, health screenings, gatherings and social distancing.

Phase 3

Allows for the complete resumption of Driver Education and remove the changes that were made during the Emergency Orders.

- Classroom time in person for 30 hours.
- Behind the Wheel of 10 hours per student.
- Observation to return to the Driver Education program.

Thank you for your time, attention and the work you are doing in the effort to safely reopen NH.

Sharon Cameron
NH Driver Education Teachers Association