

STATE OF NEW YORK

2614

2019-2020 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

January 24, 2019

Introduced by M. of A. GANTT -- read once and referred to the Committee on Transportation

AN ACT to amend the vehicle and traffic law, in relation to a driver safety course; to amend the state finance law, in relation to a driver safety course fund; to amend the insurance law, the military law, the executive law, the vehicle and traffic law, the economic development law and the penal law, in relation to making technical changes thereto; and to repeal certain provisions of the vehicle and traffic law and the state finance law relating thereto

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Articles 12-B and 12-C of the vehicle and traffic law are REPEALED and a new article 12-B is added to read as follows:

ARTICLE 12-B

DRIVER SAFETY COURSE

Section 399-a. Statement of purpose.

399-b. Establishment and implementation of driver safety course.

399-c. Course content.

399-d. Fees.

399-e. Advertising.

399-f. Report by commissioner.

399-g. Regulations.

§ 399-a. Statement of purpose. The purpose of this article is to foster and maintain driver competency through the creation of a driver safety course.

§ 399-b. Establishment and implementation of driver safety course. The commissioner shall establish and implement an internet based driver safety course for the purposes of training new drivers, and granting point and insurance reduction benefits. The commissioner shall not contract with or otherwise utilize any non-governmental entities in the establishment or implementation of this course, except that the commis-

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 sioner shall contract with a software solution and network infrastruc-
2 ture provider. Such software solution and network infrastructure provid-
3 er shall be incorporated and located within the state, have conducted
4 business with the state for a period of not less than ten years, offer
5 course content as part of their services, and use biometric technologies
6 to guarantee security. The commissioner shall implement a system that
7 allows an on-line participant to verify his or her identity and ensures
8 that such student's identity and on-line transaction is secure. The
9 commissioner shall endeavor to contract software solution and network
10 infrastructure providers certified under article fifteen-A of the execu-
11 tive law.

12 § 399-c. Course content. The commissioner shall contract with a tech-
13 nology contractor who is well-known in the community and specializes in
14 traffic safety curriculum development to develop a curriculum for the
15 driver safety course in conjunction with the governor's traffic safety
16 committee. This curriculum shall contain instruction on driver attitude,
17 collision awareness, the proper use of automobile safety devices, defen-
18 sive driving, drug and alcohol impairment, safe use of automobile tech-
19 nology, school and work zone safety, toll plaza safety, driving while
20 drowsy, driver distractions, road rage, school bus safety, and such
21 other subjects as the commissioner may prescribe. This curriculum shall
22 be reviewed and updated annually.

23 § 399-d. Fees. The commissioner is authorized to impose a fee upon
24 each student who enrolls in the driver safety course which shall not
25 exceed one hundred dollars. The proceeds from such fee shall be deposit-
26 ed in the driver safety course fund as established by section eighty-
27 nine-g of the state finance law.

28 § 399-e. Advertising. The governor's traffic safety committee shall
29 develop and implement a program to actively market and promote the driv-
30 er safety course to the general public.

31 § 399-f. Report by commissioner. The commissioner shall report annual-
32 ly to the governor, the temporary president of the senate and the speak-
33 er of the assembly the number of students taking the course, amount of
34 revenue received, the location of students by county, and whether the
35 course is taken for pre-licensing, insurance, or point reduction
36 purposes.

37 § 399-g. Regulations. The commissioner shall promulgate such rules and
38 regulations as are necessary to effectuate the provisions of this arti-
39 cle.

40 § 2. Subdivision 4 of section 502 of the vehicle and traffic law is
41 REPEALED and a new subdivision 4 is added to read as follows:

42 4. Examinations. (a) Upon submission of an application for a driver's
43 license, the applicant shall be required (i) to take and pass a test
44 relating to traffic laws, and such other traffic related matters that
45 the commissioner may prescribe, (ii) to take and pass a behind the wheel
46 examination, and (iii) to satisfactorily complete the driver safety
47 course under article twelve-B of this chapter.

48 (b) The commissioner shall cause the applicant to take a vision test
49 and a test for color blindness. Upon passage of the vision test, the
50 application may be accepted and the application fee shall be payable.

51 (c) The commissioner shall make available to each applicant for a
52 commercial driver's license instructional handbooks outlining the
53 requirements necessary to qualify for such a license, and containing a
54 discussion of the offenses which will result in disqualification from
55 operating a commercial motor vehicle as defined in section five hundred

1 one-a of this article. Such handbooks shall be available in languages as
2 the commissioner may prescribe.

3 (d) The commissioner may waive the requirement for passage of a test
4 under subparagraph (i) of paragraph (a) of this subdivision, for those
5 applicants who hold a valid or renewable driver's license issued by
6 another jurisdiction or the United States government.

7 (e) The commissioner shall promulgate rules and regulations establish-
8 ing eligibility standards for the taking and passing of knowledge tests
9 in other than written form.

10 § 3. Section 89-g of the state finance law is REPEALED and a new
11 section 89-g is added to read as follows:

12 § 89-g. Driver safety course fund. 1. There is hereby established in
13 the joint custody of the state comptroller and the commissioner of taxa-
14 tion and finance a special fund to be known as the "driver safety course
15 fund".

16 2. Such fund shall consist of all fees received by the department of
17 motor vehicles pursuant to the provisions of article twelve-B of the
18 vehicle and traffic law, and all other moneys appropriated, credited or
19 transferred thereto from any other fund or source pursuant to law.

20 3. The moneys in the driver safety course fund shall be kept separate
21 and shall not be commingled with any other moneys in the custody of the
22 commissioner of taxation and finance and the state comptroller.

23 4. The moneys in the driver safety course fund shall be annually
24 distributed as follows: not more than thirty percent of the moneys in
25 such fund shall be expended by the department of motor vehicles for the
26 purposes of administering and implementing the provisions of article
27 twelve-B of the vehicle and traffic law; not more than thirty percent of
28 the moneys in such fund shall be transferred to the dedicated highway
29 and bridge trust fund; not more than fifteen percent of the moneys in
30 such fund shall be expended for the administration of department of
31 motor vehicle regional offices located in the city of Albany, city of
32 Rochester, town of Oyster Bay, town of Bethpage, city of Syracuse,
33 village of North Syracuse, village of West Haverstraw, village of Amity-
34 ville, town of Islip, town of Huntington, town of Brookhaven, town of
35 Riverhead, city of Peekskill, city of White Plains, and city of Yonkers,
36 provided however, in the event that any of the aforementioned offices
37 has closed, relocated, or experienced a significant reduction of activ-
38 ities, no moneys shall be expended for the purpose of administration of
39 any regional office under this section; not more than five percent or
40 five million dollars, whichever is less, of the moneys in such fund
41 shall be expended by the governor's traffic safety committee for adver-
42 tising and curriculum development of the driver safety program; not more
43 than five percent or five million dollars, whichever is less, of the
44 moneys in such fund shall be expended by the department of transporta-
45 tion for culvert maintenance; not more than five percent or five million
46 dollars, whichever is less, of the moneys in such fund shall be expended
47 by the department of transportation and the division of state police for
48 work and school zone safety programs; not more than five percent or five
49 million dollars, whichever is less, of the moneys in such fund shall be
50 expended by non metropolitan transportation authority public transporta-
51 tion authorities for the para transit operations; and not more than five
52 percent or five million dollars, whichever is less, of the moneys in
53 such fund shall be expended by the metropolitan transportation authority
54 for handicapped accessible equipment.

55 § 4. Subsection (a) of section 2336 of the insurance law, as amended
56 by chapter 751 of the laws of 2005, is amended to read as follows:

(a) Any schedule of rates or rating plan for motor vehicle liability and collision insurance submitted to the superintendent shall provide for an appropriate reduction in premium charges for any insured for a three year period after successfully completing a motor vehicle ~~[accident prevention]~~ driver safety course, known as the national safety council's defensive driving course, or any driver improvement course approved by the department of motor vehicles as being equivalent to the national safety council's defensive driving course, provided that~~[r~~ ~~except as provided in article twelve-C of the vehicle and traffic law,~~ there shall be no reduction in premiums for a self instruction defensive driving course or a course which does not provide for actual classroom instruction for a minimum number of hours as determined by the department of motor vehicles. Such reduction in premium charges shall be subsequently modified to the extent appropriate, based upon analysis of loss experience statistics and other relevant factors. All such accident prevention courses shall be monitored by the department of motor vehicles and shall include components of instruction in "Road Rage" awareness and in "Work Zone Safety" awareness as defined by the commissioner of motor vehicles. The provisions of this section shall not apply to attendance at a program pursuant to article twenty-one of the vehicle and traffic law as a result of any traffic infraction.

§ 4-a. Subsection (a) of section 2336 of the insurance law, as amended by chapter 585 of the laws of 2002, is amended to read as follows:

(a) Any schedule of rates or rating plan for motor vehicle liability and collision insurance submitted to the superintendent shall provide for an appropriate reduction in premium charges for any insured for a three year period after successfully completing a motor vehicle ~~[accident prevention]~~ driver safety course, known as the national safety council's defensive driving course, or any driver improvement course approved by the department of motor vehicles as being equivalent to the national safety council's defensive driving course, provided that in either event there shall be no reduction in premiums for a self instruction defensive driving course or a course which does not provide for actual classroom instruction for a minimum number of hours as determined by the department of motor vehicles. Such reduction in premium charges shall be subsequently modified to the extent appropriate, based upon analysis of loss experience statistics and other relevant factors. All such accident prevention courses shall be monitored by the department of motor vehicles and shall include components of instruction in "Road Rage" awareness and in "Work Zone Safety" awareness as defined by the commissioner of motor vehicles. The provisions of this section shall not apply to attendance at a program pursuant to article twenty-one of the vehicle and traffic law as a result of any traffic infraction.

§ 5. Section 301-c of the military law, as added by chapter 489 of the laws of 2011, is amended to read as follows:

§ 301-c. ~~[Accident prevention]~~ Driver safety course information. The division of military and naval affairs shall provide returning servicemen and women who have returned from a combat theater or combat zone of operations with information about ~~[accident prevention]~~ driver safety courses approved by the commissioner of motor vehicles pursuant to article twelve-B of the vehicle and traffic law. This information may be provided in written form to be available at Yellow Ribbon Reintegration programs or any other reintegration programs offered by the division or may be made available online on the division's website. The division shall also provide a link to the department of motor vehicles website

1 pages containing information about the [~~accident prevention~~] driver
2 safety courses.

3 § 6. Subdivision 20 of section 353 of the executive law, as added by
4 chapter 489 of the laws of 2011, is amended to read as follows:

5 20. To make available information on [~~accident prevention~~] driver
6 safety courses approved by the commissioner of motor vehicles online on
7 the division's website. The division shall provide a link to the depart-
8 ment of motor vehicles website pages containing information on the
9 [~~accident prevention~~] driver safety courses.

10 § 7. Paragraph (e) of subdivision 4 of section 503 of the vehicle and
11 traffic law, as added by section 2 of part E of chapter 59 of the laws
12 of 2004, is amended to read as follows:

13 (e) Any completion of a motor vehicle [~~accident prevention~~] driver
14 safety course approved pursuant to article twelve-B of this chapter
15 shall not serve to reduce the calculation of points on a person's driv-
16 ing record for the purposes of this section.

17 § 8. Subdivision 3 of section 509-bb of the vehicle and traffic law,
18 as added by chapter 599 of the laws of 1993, is amended to read as
19 follows:

20 (3) For purposes of this section, one such accident shall not be
21 counted if the person successfully completes a motor vehicle [~~accident~~
22 prevention] driver safety course approved by the commissioner.

23 § 9. Paragraphs (d) and (f) of subdivision 1 of section 509-c of the
24 vehicle and traffic law, paragraph (d) as amended and paragraph (f) as
25 added by chapter 599 of the laws of 1993, are amended to read as
26 follows:

27 (d) for a period of one year, if that person has accumulated nine or
28 more points on his or her driving record for acts that occurred during
29 an eighteen month period on or after September fifteenth, nineteen
30 hundred eighty-five, provided, however, that the disqualification shall
31 terminate if the person has reduced the points to less than nine through
32 the successful completion of a motor vehicle [~~accident prevention~~] driv-
33 er safety course.

34 (f) for a period of one year, if that person fails to pass a road test
35 administered pursuant to section five hundred nine-bb of this article;
36 provided, however, that such person shall be given the opportunity to
37 complete a motor vehicle [~~accident prevention~~] driver safety course
38 approved by the commissioner and to then undergo a second road test
39 administered pursuant to section five hundred nine-bb of this article,
40 and such disqualification shall cease if such person passes such second
41 road test.

42 § 10. Paragraphs (d) and (f) of subdivision 2 of section 509-c of the
43 vehicle and traffic law, paragraph (d) as amended and paragraph (f) as
44 added by chapter 599 of the laws of 1993, are amended to read as
45 follows:

46 (d) for a period of one year, if that person accumulates nine or more
47 points on his or her driving record for acts occurring during an eigh-
48 teen month period, provided, however, that the disqualification shall
49 terminate if the person has reduced the points to less than nine through
50 the successful completion of a motor vehicle [~~accident prevention~~] driv-
51 er safety course.

52 (f) for a period of one year, if that person fails to pass a road test
53 administered pursuant to section five hundred nine-bb of this article;
54 provided, however, that such person shall be given the opportunity to
55 complete a motor vehicle [~~accident prevention~~] driver safety course
56 approved by the commissioner and to then undergo a second road test

1 administered pursuant to section five hundred nine-bb of this article,
2 and such disqualification shall cease if such person passes such second
3 road test.

4 § 11. Paragraphs (d) and (f) of subdivision 1 of section 509-cc of the
5 vehicle and traffic law, paragraph (d) as amended and paragraph (f) as
6 added by chapter 599 of the laws of 1993, are amended to read as
7 follows:

8 (d) for a period of one year, if that person has accumulated nine or
9 more points on his or her driving record for acts that occurred during
10 an eighteen month period on or after September fifteenth, nineteen
11 hundred eighty-five, provided, however, that the disqualification shall
12 terminate if the person has reduced the points to less than nine through
13 the successful completion of a motor vehicle [~~accident prevention~~] driv-
14 er safety course.

15 (f) for a period of one year, if that person fails to pass a road test
16 administered pursuant to section five hundred nine-bb of this article;
17 provided, however, that such person shall be given the opportunity to
18 complete a motor vehicle [~~accident prevention~~] driver safety course
19 approved by the commissioner and to then undergo a second road test
20 administered pursuant to section five hundred nine-bb of this article,
21 and such disqualification shall cease if such person passes such second
22 road test.

23 § 12. Paragraphs (e) and (g) of subdivision 2 of section 509-cc of the
24 vehicle and traffic law, paragraph (e) as amended and paragraph (g) as
25 added by chapter 599 of the laws of 1993, are amended to read as
26 follows:

27 (e) for a period of one year, if that person accumulates nine or more
28 points on his or her driving record for acts occurring during an eigh-
29 teen month period, provided, however, that the disqualification shall
30 terminate if the person has reduced the points to less than nine through
31 the successful completion of a motor vehicle [~~accident prevention~~] driv-
32 er safety course.

33 (g) for a period of one year, if that person fails to pass a road test
34 administered pursuant to section five hundred nine-bb of this article;
35 provided, however, that such person shall be given the opportunity to
36 complete a motor vehicle [~~accident prevention~~] driver safety course
37 approved by the commissioner and to then undergo a second road test
38 administered pursuant to section five hundred nine-bb of this article,
39 and such disqualification shall cease if such person passes such second
40 road test.

41 § 13. Paragraph 1 of subdivision (c) of section 1146 of the vehicle
42 and traffic law, as amended by chapter 333 of the laws of 2010, is
43 amended to read as follows:

44 1. A driver of a motor vehicle who causes serious physical injury as
45 defined in article ten of the penal law to a pedestrian or bicyclist
46 while failing to exercise due care in violation of subdivision (a) of
47 this section, shall be guilty of a traffic infraction punishable by a
48 fine of not more than seven hundred fifty dollars or by imprisonment for
49 not more than fifteen days or by required participation in a motor vehi-
50 cle [~~accident prevention~~] driver safety course pursuant to paragraph
51 (e-1) of subdivision two of section 65.10 of the penal law or by any
52 combination of such fine, imprisonment or course, and by suspension of a
53 license or registration pursuant to subparagraph (xiv) or (xv) of para-
54 graph b of subdivision two of section five hundred ten of this chapter.

1 § 14. Subdivision 18-h of section 100 of the economic development law,
2 as added by chapter 489 of the laws of 2011, is amended to read as
3 follows:

4 18-h. to include in the "NY-USA Proud" program those companies who
5 provide [~~accident-prevention~~] driver safety courses approved by the
6 commissioner of motor vehicles at a reduced rate to the servicemen and
7 women who have returned from a combat theater or combat zone of oper-
8 ations.

9 § 15. Paragraph (e-1) of subdivision 2 of section 65.10 of the penal
10 law, as added by chapter 571 of the laws of 2006, is amended to read as
11 follows:

12 (e-1) Participate in a motor vehicle [~~accident-prevention~~] driver
13 safety course. The court may require such condition where a person has
14 been convicted of a traffic infraction for a violation of article twen-
15 ty-six of the vehicle and traffic law where the commission of such
16 violation caused the serious physical injury or death of another person.
17 For purposes of this paragraph, the term "motor vehicle [~~accident~~
18 ~~prevention~~] driver safety course" shall mean a motor vehicle [~~accident~~
19 ~~prevention~~] driver safety course approved by the department of motor
20 vehicles pursuant to article twelve-B of the vehicle and traffic law;

21 § 16. This act shall take effect September 1, 2019; provided that the
22 amendments to subsection (a) of section 2336 of the insurance law made
23 by section four of this act shall be subject to the expiration and
24 reversion of such subsection pursuant to section 5 of chapter 751 of the
25 laws of 2005, as amended, when upon such date the provisions of section
26 four-a of this act shall take effect.