

AORP ALBERTA OCCUPANT RESTRAINT PROGRAM

A Provincial Traffic Safety Program

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Alberta Health Services and Alberta
police services

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Updated Safety Regulations for Child Safety Seats Sold in Canada

Updated safety regulations for the manufacturing of child safety seats sold in Canada came into effect January 1, 2012. According to Transport Canada, the new regulations are part of a regular process of reviewing and updating standards. The most recent update aligns some Canadian elements with the U.S., and incorporates new and unique Canadian testing requirements.

The major new elements include:

- Changing the dynamic testing of child seats to adopt most of the U.S. testing parameters.
- Changing the definition of an infant from 9 kg (20 lb) to 10 kg (22 lb) and adding the developmental guideline of walking unassisted.
- Increasing the maximum allowable weight for child seats from 22 kg (45 lb) to 30 kg (65 lb).
- Introducing dynamic testing requirements for booster seats.
- Allowing certification of harnesses to be used on school buses for special needs children.

(Sources: [TC Dec 2011 News](#) and [TC Dec 2010 News](#),
Accessed February 6, 2012)

The changes provide more options for optimum protection of children traveling in motor vehicles but **have no impact on Alberta legislation** regarding the use of child safety seats.

What do these regulation changes mean to parents and professionals?

Updates to Transport Canada's safety regulations reflect the incorporation of best practices, research and new technology into the development of standards for child safety seats and booster seats. Parents do not need to update their seat. They should continue to use a Canadian-approved child safety seat or booster seat according to the manufacturer's instructions. The latest changes give parents more options when it comes to choosing safety seats to safely accommodate their children for longer periods of time:

- Parents are encouraged to use the safer, rear-facing position as long as possible. Some child safety seats are designed for rear-facing use up to 18 kg (40 lb). Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for the seat.
- Parents may choose to use a forward-facing child safety seat longer than required by Alberta law, to provide further protection until their child reaches the upper weight limit for the seat. Some seats are designed for forward-facing use with the harness up to 30 kg (65 lb). Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for the seat.

Do these regulation updates change Alberta legislation?

There is no change to Alberta legislation. In Alberta, the law requires all drivers and passengers to be buckled up. It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that all passengers under the age of 16 years are properly restrained in the vehicle. For

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children weighing less than 18 kg (40 lbs), the driver needs to make sure they are properly restrained in an approved child safety seat that is correctly installed in the vehicle. If the passengers are not properly restrained, the driver may receive a seat belt fine. The fine for not wearing a seat belt is \$115.

Reminders about Alberta law:

- Alberta law does not set the weight or age at which a child moves from a rear-facing to a forward-facing position. Parents can keep their baby rear-facing in an approved seat as long as possible, according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Parents **must use** an approved child safety seat with a harness until their child weighs at least 18 kg (40 lb) or is 6 years of age. After that, Alberta law does not set an upper weight limit for the use of an approved child safety seat. Parents can keep a child in the safer 5-point harness to a weight of up to 30 kg (65 lb), according to the manufacturer's instructions for the seat.

Helpful Links:

- Transport Canada, Road Transportation, Safe Drivers and Passengers <http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/roadsafety/safedrivers-childsafety-index-53.htm>
- Alberta Occupant Restraint Program www.albertaseatbelts.ca
- Alberta Office of Traffic Safety www.saferoads.ca

What's holding

you back?