



AGENCY OF TRANSPORTATION

Seat Belt Usage Compliance Data

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Seat Belt Compliance

Introduction

Seat belt laws are divided into two categories: *primary* and *secondary*. Primary enforcement allows a police officer to stop and take an action if he or she observes a violation. A secondary law, such as Vermont's seatbelt law, is described below:

This section be enforced only if a law enforcement officer has detained the operator of a motor vehicle for another suspected traffic violation. An operator shall not be subject to the penalty established in this section unless the operator is required to pay a penalty for the primary violation.

23 V.S.A. § 1259(e)

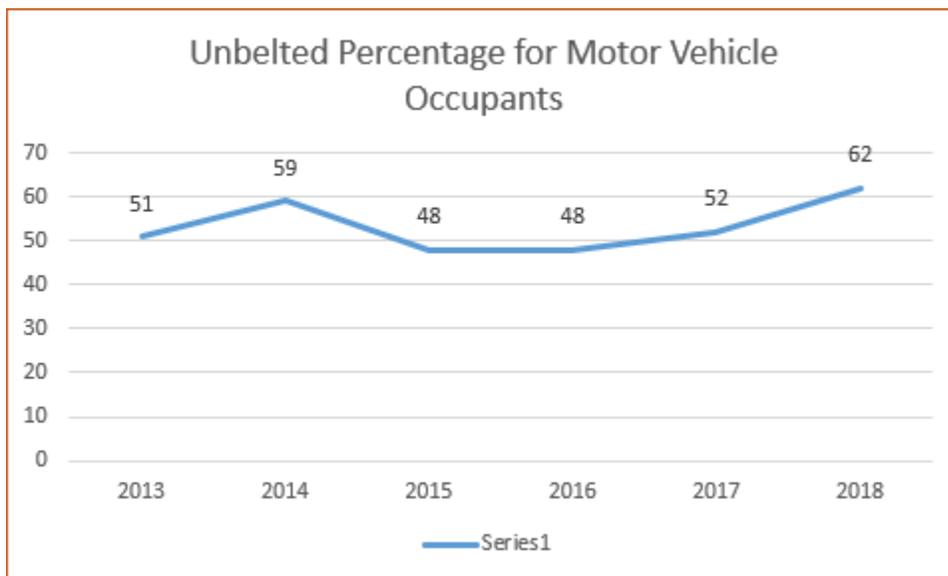
- **34 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands** have primary seat belt laws for front seat occupants. Of these:
 - **18 states, D.C. and 2 territories** include rear seats as primary enforcement.
 - **4 states** include rear seats as secondary enforcement.
 - **12 states and the Virgin Islands** do not include rear seats.
 - **15 states** have secondary laws for adult front seat occupants. Of these:
 - **6 states** also have secondary laws for rear seats.
 - **9 states** do not include rear seats.
- **New Hampshire** has enacted neither a primary nor a secondary seat belt law for adults, although the state does have a primary child passenger safety law that covers all drivers and passengers under 18. (Source GHSA Website, Accessed February 2018)

Vermont

- In 2018, 69 people died on the roadways of Vermont. Of those, 34 people were not wearing seatbelts at the time of the crash. Further, 17 of those people were either partially or totally ejected from the vehicle. FARS 2018 Data (FARS- Fatality Analysis Reporting System).

| Fatalities by Vehicle Type and Restraint/Safety Equipment Used | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Road User Type | Restraint/Safety Equipment | 2019 | 2018 | 2017 | 2016 | 2015 | 2014 |
| Motor Vehicle Occupant | Unbelted | 0 | 34 | 24 | 21 | 16 | 16 |
| | - Driver | | 25 | 17 | 11 | 11 | 13 |
| | - Passenger | | 9 | 6 | 10 | 5 | 3 |
| | - UTV Driver | | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Belted | 3 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 17 | 11 |
| | - Driver | 3 | 15 | 15 | 20 | 13 | 8 |
| | - Passenger | | 6 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 3 |
| | Improper Belt Use/Child Restraint | | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Motorcyclist/ATV | Wearing Helmet | | 5 | 11 | 10 | 11 | 7 |
| | Non-DOT Compliant Helmet/Improper | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | No Helmet | | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Vulnerable Users | Pedestrians | | 6 | 9 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| | Bicyclists | | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 0 |
| Unknown | Unknown Belt/Helmet Use | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 3 |
| % Unbelted* | | 0% | 62% | 52% | 48% | 48% | 59% |
| Total Fatalities | | 3 | 69 | 70 | 64 | 58 | 44 |

***Of all fatalities: only occupants in vehicles equipped with seatbelts are used in the calculation for unbelted percentage. Excludes: motorcycles, ATVs, pedestrians, bicyclists and unknowns. (Sum of Belted" & "Unbelted", divided into "Unbelted")**



| Injury Ejected | Fatality (K) (Multiple Items) | |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| Row Labels | Count of Person Type | |
| 2010 | | 20 |
| 2011 | | 14 |
| 2012 | | 24 |
| 2013 | | 20 |
| 2014 | | 14 |
| 2015 | | 21 |
| 2016 | | 24 |
| 2017 | | 17 |
| 2018 | | 17 |
| Grand Total | | 171 |

Primary Seat Belt States

| State | Who is Covered (Yrs.) | In What Seat | Maximum Fine 1st Offense |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|--|--|
| Alabama | 15+ | Front | \$25 |
| Alaska | 16+ | All | \$15 |
| Arkansas | 15+ | Front | \$25 (plus court costs and city/county jail fines) |
| California | 16+ | All | \$162 (\$20 fine + \$142 in penalties and assessments) |
| Connecticut | 8+ | Front | \$92 for >18 (\$50 fine + \$7 fee + \$35 surcharge) \$120 for <18 (\$75 fine + \$10 fee + \$35 surcharge) |
| Delaware ¹ | 16+ | All | \$25 |
| D.C. | 16+ | All | \$50 |
| Florida | 6+ | Front | \$30 |
| | 6 - 17 | All | |
| Georgia | 8 - 17 | All | \$15 |
| | 18+ | Front | |
| Guam | All | All | \$100 |
| Hawaii | 8+ | All | \$112 (including administrative fees) |
| Illinois | 16+ | All | \$25 |
| Indiana | 16+ | All | \$25 |
| Iowa | 18+ | Front | \$127.50 (including court costs) |
| Kansas | 14 - 17 | All | \$80 |
| | 18+ | Front (other seating positions are secondary enforcement) | |
| Kentucky | 7 & younger and 57+ | All | \$25 |
| | 8+ | | |
| Louisiana | 13+ | All | \$50 |
| Maine | 18+ | All | \$50 |
| Maryland | 16+ | All (secondary for rear seats) | \$83 (fine plus court costs) |
| Michigan | 16+ | Front | \$25 |
| Minnesota | 7 & younger and 57+ | All | \$25, plus approx. \$75 court surcharge (surcharge varies slightly by county) |
| | 8+ | | |
| Mississippi | 7+ | All | \$25 |
| New Jersey | 7 & younger and 57+ | All (secondary for rear seats) | \$46 (including court costs) |
| | 8+ | | |
| New Mexico | 18+ | All | \$25 |
| New York | 15 & younger | All | \$50 |
| | All | Front | |
| North Carolina | 16+ | All (secondary for rear seats) | \$25 + \$135.50 in court costs (\$10 + no court costs for rear seats) |
| Northern Mariana Islands | 6+ | All | \$25 |
| Oklahoma | 9+ | Front | \$20 |
| Oregon | 16+ | All | \$115 |

| | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Puerto Rico | 9+ (or 57"+) | | \$50 |
| Rhode Island | 18+ | All | \$40 |
| South Carolina | 8+ | All | \$25 |
| Tennessee | 16+ | Front | \$30 |
| Texas | 7 & younger and 57' + | All | \$50 (driver or passenger) |
| | 8+ | | \$200 (driver) |
| Utah | 16+ | All | \$45 (2nd offense) |
| Virgin Islands | All | Front | \$25 to \$250 |
| Washington | 16+ | All | \$124 |
| West Virginia | 8+ | Front | \$25 |
| | 8-17 | All | |
| Wisconsin | 8+ | All ¹ | \$10 |
| Total | 34 States + D.C., PR, 4 Terr. | All (19 + D.C., 2 Terr.) Rear Secondary (10) Front Seat Only (9 + VI) | |

¹ Delaware's seat belt law is a civil penalty.

² In Wisconsin, all passengers are covered except for children properly restrained in a child safety restraint system.

Secondary Seat Belt States

| State | Who is Covered (Yrs.) | In What Seat | Maximum Fine 1st Offense |
|---------------------|--|--|---|
| Arizona | 8-15 | All | \$10 |
| | 8+ | Front | |
| Colorado | 16+ (primary for under 18) | Front | \$71 |
| Idaho | 7+ (primary for drivers under 18) | All | \$10 (drivers <18 pay \$51.50, including court costs) |
| Massachusetts | 13+ | All | \$25 |
| Missouri | 8 - 15 (primary) | All | \$50 |
| | 16+ | Front | \$10 (driver and passenger) |
| Montana | 6+ | All | \$20 |
| Nebraska | 18+ | Front | \$25 |
| Nevada | 6+ | All | \$25 |
| North Dakota | 18+ | Front | \$20 |
| | 18 & younger (primary) | All | \$25 + 1 point on license |
| Ohio | 8 - 14 | All | \$30 driver; \$20 passenger |
| | 15+ | Front | |
| Pennsylvania | 18+ | Front | \$10 |
| | 8 - 17 (primary) | All | |
| South Dakota | 18+ | Front | \$25 |
| Vermont | 18+ (primary for <18) | All | \$25 |
| Virginia | All drivers; passengers 18+ (primary for passengers 18 & younger in all seats) | Front | \$25 (driver ticketed for passengers <18) |
| Wyoming | 9+ | All | \$25 driver; \$10 passenger |
| Total States | 15 States | All (6) Front Seat Only (9) | |

Research Sources

Center for Disease Control Motor Vehicle Facts: Seat Belts

<https://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/seatbelts/index.html>

Insurance Institute of Highway Safety

<http://www.iihs.org/iihs/topics/t/safety-belts/topicoverview>

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Website State Specific Highway Safety Data:

<https://cdan.nhtsa.gov/STSI.htm>

State of Maine Seat Belt Compliance Study

[NHTSA Evaluation of PBL 2010.pdf](#)

State of Minnesota Seat Belt Analysis Study/Medical Costs

[Minnesota Seat Belt Report.pdf](#)

Vermont State Highway Safety Office – Behavioral Safety Unit

<http://ghsp.vermont.gov/>