



Department of Motor Vehicles  
*Agency of Transportation*

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**To:** House and Senate Committees on Judiciary  
House and Senate Committees on Transportation  
**From:** Wanda Minoli, Commissioner, Department of Motor Vehicles  
**Date:** January 15, 2021

**Subject:** Annual Report - Driver License Suspensions Calendar Year 2020

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In 2016, the Vermont Legislature passed Act 147 into law. The aim of the legislation was to limit the use of driver license suspensions to driving offenses and for failure to pay traffic tickets stemming from actual motor vehicle violations.

In accordance with Act 147 of 2016, Section 23, the Department of Motor Vehicles has prepared the following report on Driver License/Privilege-to-Operate Suspensions for Calendar Year 2020.

**Background:**

Prior to the enactment of Act 147 of 2016, failure to pay a traffic fine resulted in an indefinite license or privilege- to-operate suspension. Many Vermonters who were unable to pay their initial traffic ticket, but who needed to drive in order to get to work, were left with no option but to drive with their license suspended. Many of these Vermonters would then receive more tickets for driving while their license was suspended and other violations, creating a never-ending cycle of people getting more tickets that they could not pay simply for trying to get to work. As a result, the legislature eliminated the use of license suspensions as an incentive to pay traffic fines.

**2020 Driver License and Privilege-to-Operate Suspensions:**

- 1. Total number of suspensions imposed in calendar year 2020: 12,425**
  - A. Nonpayment of a traffic violation: 6,505
  - B. Accumulation of points against a person's driving record: 1,229
  - C. Pursuant to 23 V.S.A. §§ 1206 and 1208 (criminal DUI convictions)<sup>1</sup>: 519
  - D. Pursuant to 23 V.S.A. § 1205 (civil DUI suspensions): 755
  - E. Pursuant to 23 V.S.A. § 1216 (civil DUI suspensions; under 21 years of age): 51
  - F. 7 V.S.A. § 656 (underage alcohol violation; failure to report to or complete Diversion): 177
  - G. 18 V.S.A. § 4230b  
(underage marijuana violation; failure to report to or complete Diversion): 53
  
2. Number of unique individuals whose licenses were suspended in 2020: 8,977  
Number of unique individuals whose licenses were suspended in 2020 and whose address of record is Vermont: 7,517
  
- 3. Total number of active suspensions in effect<sup>2</sup>: 261,607**
  - A. Nonpayment of a traffic violation: 131,059
  - B. Accumulation of points against a person's driving record: 33,641
  - C. Pursuant to 23 V.S.A. §§ 1206 and 1208 (criminal DUI convictions): 24,692
  - D. Pursuant to 23 V.S.A. § 1205 (civil DUI suspensions): 20,513
  - E. Pursuant to 23 V.S.A. § 1216 (civil DUI suspensions; under 21 years of age): 982
  - F. 7 V.S.A. § 656 (underage alcohol violation; failure to report to or complete Diversion): 3,259
  - G. 18 V.S.A. § 4230b  
(underage marijuana violation; failure to report to or complete Diversion): 312
  
4. Number of unique individuals with pending suspensions in effect: 90,952  
Number of unique individuals with pending suspensions in effect and whose address of record is Vermont: 49,819

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<sup>1</sup> Significant reductions in DUI suspensions in 1C-E and 3C-E are presumed to be related to delays in hearings authorized in Administrative Order 49 in response to COVID-19 pandemic.

<sup>2</sup> Total active suspensions in effect as of 1/6/2021.