

Colorado's Child Restraint Law

Colorado Revised Statute 42-4-236

Most recent changes effective August 1, 2003.

Bolded text indicates Colorado Law. Smaller text indicates "best practice" recommendations by national safety advocates*.



Infants must ride in a rear-facing car seat until they are at least 1 year old and at least 20 lbs.

Safety advocates* recommend that infants continue rear-facing as long as possible for the best protection in a crash. Many larger "convertible" type car seats will allow children to ride rear-facing up to 30 lbs.



Children aged 1 to 4 years who weigh 20 to 40 lbs. must be restrained in a forward-facing car seat.

Safety advocates* recommend restraining your child in a "5-point" harness system until they are at least 40 lbs. This harness provides the best protection for your child. Use upper tether straps where applicable (refer to your car seat and vehicle's owner's manual for more information).



Children over 40 lbs. who are less than 6 years old must continue to ride in a child restraint (unless they are 55" tall). Typically, this is a booster seat.

While Colorado Law requires older children to be restrained in booster seats until they are 6 years old or 55" tall, safety advocates* recommend keeping children in booster seats until they are about 57" tall. A child's height is the best predictor of proper seat belt fit.



Children between 6 and 16 years old must be restrained in a seat belt.

Everyone in the car should always be properly buckled up, either with appropriate car seats, booster seats or vehicle seat belts. Proper seat belt fit is achieved when: (1) the child can sit all the way back against the seat back with their knees bent naturally at the edge of the seat; (2) the shoulder belt comfortably crossing the shoulder between the neck and arm; and (3) the lap belt sitting low on their hips, touching the thighs. This is usually achieved when the child is 57" tall, regardless of age or weight.

*Safety advocates include the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the National SAFE KIDS Campaign.