

# VIRGINIA

## CHILD RESTRAINT LAWS: PRIMARY ENFORCEMENT

### 46.2-1095 (A)

Summons driver if they fail to properly secure a child up to age 8 in a child restraint device that meets federal standards. Rear-facing restraints shall be placed in the back seat. If there is no back seat, the front seat may be used if the passenger side air bag has been deactivated.

### 46.2-1095 (B)

Summons driver if he/she is transporting a person at least 8 years of age, but less than 18 years of age, who is not properly secured by an appropriate safety belt system.

### 46.2-1100

Use of a standard seat belt is permitted if the child is at least 4 years old but less than 8 years old and his/her weight, size or medical condition would make use of an approved child restraint impractical. The driver must carry a waiver signed by a Virginia physician. (Booster seats are available for children up to 125 pounds in weight and seats with an internal harness are available for children up to 85 pounds.)

### 46.2-1095, 46.2-1096 & 46.2-1099

Exemptions: interior design makes use impractical, public transportation, bus, school bus, farm vehicle, medical reasons if physician statement is displayed, taxicabs, executive sedans, and limousines.

### 46.2-1156.1

No person under age 16 shall be transported in the rear cargo area of a pickup truck. There are exemptions for certain parades and farming operations.

## SAFETY BELT LAW: SECONDARY ENFORCEMENT

### 46.2-1094

Summons driver and each passenger 18 years of age and older occupying the front seat who is not wearing a safety belt. Exceptions: mail carriers, newspaper delivery persons, taxi drivers and passengers, certain law enforcement officers, waste collectors, meter readers and persons with physical or medical disability waivers.

**(Before enforcement action is taken,  
review the applicable code sections.)**

Compiled by:

Virginia Highway Safety Office  
Department of Motor Vehicles



## 4 STEPS OF CHILD SAFETY RESTRAINTS

This card is a guide. The proper child seat selection and use should be chosen based on the child's age, height, and weight, as well as fit of the child seat in the vehicle.



### Birth-2 REAR-FACING

Child should remain in a rear-facing car seat for **AS LONG AS POSSIBLE** and until they reach the top weight or height limit allowed by the car seat manufacturer.

#### INFANT / CONVERTIBLE / ALL-IN-ONE

It has a harness and, in a crash, cradles and moves with the child to reduce the stress to the child's head, fragile neck and spinal cord.



### 2+ FORWARD-FACING

Children over age 2 can switch to a forward-facing car seat.

#### CONVERTIBLE / COMBINATION / ALL-IN-ONE

Has a harness and tether that limits the child's forward movement during a crash.



### 4-12 BOOSTER

Positions the seat belt so that it fits properly across the upper thighs and snug across the shoulder and chest.

#### BOOSTER / COMBINATION / ALL-IN-ONE



### 8-ADULT SEAT BELT

Children who are tall enough to sit without slouching, able to keep their back against the vehicle seat, able to keep their knees naturally bent over the edge of the vehicle seat and able to keep their feet flat on the floor. The seat belt should fit across the upper thighs and is snug across the shoulder and chest to restrain the child.

## SAFETY CHECKLIST

These are a few items to check to ensure that the child restraint is properly installed. Correct installation could save a life.

- NO rear-facing infants in front seat with active passenger-side air bags.
- NO infant (under 2 years of age) facing front of vehicle.
- Safety seat anchored tightly in vehicle.
- Child buckled in safety seat and harness straps are snug.
- The safety seat harness straps should be routed through slots **BELOW** shoulder level when rear-facing and routed through slots **ABOVE** shoulders when forward-facing.
- Harness retainer clip is at armpit level.
- Child should remain rear-facing until they reach the top weight or height limit allowed by the car seat manufacturer.
- The seat belt should not rest on the stomach area or across the neck or face.

**Remember: All children under 13 should ride in the back seat.**  
Always read the child restraint instructions and the vehicle owner's manual.