



RBs in line for extensions

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Every state has its own transportation agency that handles driver's licensing, so standardizing laws for new drivers isn't as easy as it sounds – even if some safety advocates find the inconsistency alarming. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Many states enact tougher requirements for new drivers

Terry Collins
USA TODAY

A new wave of state laws is enforcing stricter requirements for new drivers, but states still can't agree on how much practice is needed. • While most states have some form of graduated driver's licensing laws, ranging from as low as 20 and as high as 70 supervised hours, more states are looking into adopting tougher mandates for young people, said Jonathan Adkins, CEO of the Governors Highway Safety Association, a Washington, DC-based nonprofit.

Florida, Washington and New Jersey tightened up requirements for new drivers in 2025, but even these new laws have inconsistent requirements. The new laws come as some traffic safety advocates say the United States would benefit from more uniform laws on the topic. "There should be a national law for teen drivers," said Cheryl Giles, the longtime owner of Lakeland Atlantic Driving School in Winter Haven, Florida, which conducts about 1,000 student driving tests annually. "We desperately need some consistency." Meanwhile, motor vehicle crashes continue to be among the leading causes of death for teens in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Teen drivers also face a disproportionately higher risk of crashes in comparison with older drivers, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports.

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"Whether you are in Virginia, Florida, Utah or even in the most rural parts of the country, the roads can be very dangerous places, especially when you don't fully understand the dangers of driving."

Tammy Gweedo McGee
Safe driving advocate

TSA's PreCheck lane uses facial ID tech

Service currently available at 15 U.S. airports

Michelle Del Rey
USA TODAY

The Transportation Security Administration launched a quicker version of PreCheck, although the service is currently available at only 15 airports in the United States. TSA PreCheck Touchless ID utilizes an enhanced facial recognition technology, Traveler Verification Service, which creates a biometric template of a passenger's live facial image and compares it to images the passenger previously provided to the federal government. The live image is taken at an airport checkpoint. The technology is currently being used by U.S. Customs and Border Protection, according to the TSA's website.

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TSA PreCheck Touchless ID is in use at 15 airports around the country. NATHAN J. FISH/THE OKLAHOMAN FILE

Protests across U.S. fight GOP redistricting push

Texas Dems continue to block new maps in Republican state

Matt Tracy
Reuters

Pro-democracy activists and labor groups held hundreds of rallies and other events across the United States on Aug. 16, protesting the Trump administration's push for Texas to redraw its congressional map in favor of Republicans. Former U.S. Rep. Beto O'Rourke was among those who spoke in Texas, from

which dozens of Democratic state lawmakers fled to deny Republicans the quorum needed to vote on a redistricting plan that President Donald Trump had demanded. "They do this because they are afraid," O'Rourke told an audience, speaking of those attempting redistricting. "They fear this power they see here today." Drucilla Tigner, executive director of pro-democracy coalition Texas For All, told Reuters that pro-democracy and labor groups held over 300 events attended by tens of thousands of people in 44 states and the District of Columbia. Many of the more than 50 Texas

Democrats who fled the state have been staying in Illinois, which was among the protest sites Aug. 16. The Texas lawmakers in Illinois are out of reach of civil arrest warrants that could be acted on within Texas. The Texas Democrats kept the map from coming to a vote during a special legislative session called by Texas Gov. Greg Abbott that ended Aug. 15. Abbott immediately called a second special session. Abbott said that redistricting plans, legislation to increase flash flood safety in the wake of deadly July flooding, and other legislative work remain undone because Democrats are absent.

Texas Democratic Party Chair Kendall Scudder is leading a fight on two fronts: rebuilding his party's reach in every corner of the state and stopping a Republican redistricting plan he warns could entrench GOP dominance for the next decade. The battle comes in a state with one of the nation's lowest voter participation rates and a political map already tilted heavily toward Republicans. "They already have more power than the vote totals justify," Scudder told the Amarillo Globe-Press, part of the USA TODAY Network.

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