**South Carolina General Assembly**

125th Session, 2023-2024

**A146, R161, H4673**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

General Bill

Sponsors: Reps. Erickson, Gilliam, Williams and Henegan

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Introduced in the House on January 9, 2024

Introduced in the Senate on April 2, 2024

Currently residing in the House

Governor's Action: May 13, 2024, Signed

Summary: Beginner's permits

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

 Date Body Action Description with journal page number

 12/14/2023 House Prefiled

 12/14/2023 House Referred to Committee on **Education and Public Works**

 1/9/2024 House Introduced and read first time (House Journal‑page 119)

 1/9/2024 House Referred to Committee on **Education and Public Works** (House Journal‑page 119)

 1/10/2024 Scrivener's error corrected

 3/27/2024 House Committee report: Favorable **Education and Public Works** (House Journal‑page 5)

 3/28/2024 House Member(s) request name added as sponsor:
 Williams, Henegan

 3/28/2024 House Read second time (House Journal‑page 38)

 3/28/2024 House Roll call Yeas-111 Nays-0 (House Journal‑page 39)

 3/28/2024 House Unanimous consent for third reading on next legislative day (House Journal‑page 40)

 3/29/2024 House Read third time and sent to Senate (House Journal‑page 3)

 4/2/2024 Senate Introduced and read first time (Senate Journal‑page 14)

 4/2/2024 Senate Referred to Committee on **Transportation** (Senate Journal‑page 14)

 4/17/2024 Senate Committee report: Favorable **Transportation** (Senate Journal‑page 60)

 4/18/2024 Scrivener's error corrected

 4/25/2024 Senate Read second time (Senate Journal‑page 31)

 4/25/2024 Senate Roll call Ayes-38 Nays-0 (Senate Journal‑page 31)

 4/30/2024 Senate Read third time and enrolled (Senate Journal‑page 13)

 5/8/2024 Ratified R 161

 5/13/2024 Signed By Governor

 5/29/2024 Effective date 11/13/24

 5/29/2024 Act No. 146

View the latest  [legislative information](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/billsearch.php?billnumbers=4673&session=125&summary=B)  at the website

**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[12/14/2023](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/prever/4673_20231214.docx)

[01/10/2024](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/prever/4673_20240110.docx)

[03/27/2024](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/prever/4673_20240327.docx)

[04/17/2024](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/prever/4673_20240417.docx)

[04/18/2024](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/prever/4673_20240418.docx)

(A146, R161, H4673)

AN ACT TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 56-1-50, RELATING TO BEGINNERS’ PERMITS, HOURS, AND CONDITIONS OF VEHICLE OPERATION, RENEWAL AND FEEs, DRIVERS’ TRAINING COURSEs, AND ELIGIBILITY FOR FULL LICENSURE, SO AS TO MAKE TECHNICAL CHANGES, EXEMPT ADDITIONAL PERSONS FROM OBTAINING BEGINNERS’ PERMITS BEFORE OPERATING CERTAIN MOTOR VEHICLES, TO PROVIDE CERTAIN PERSONS AT LEAST FIFTEEN YEARS OF AGE MUST HOLD A BEGINNER’S PERMIT BEFORE BEInG ELIGIBLE FOR FULL LICENSURE, AND TO PROVIDE PERSONS AT LEAST EIGHTEEN YEARS OLD MAY TAKE THE DRIVING TEST AFTER MAINTAIniNG A BEGINNER’S PERMIT FOR AT LEAST THIRTY DAYS TO OPERATE CERTAIN MOTOR VEHICLES.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

Beginners’ permits

SECTION 1. Section 56-1-50 of the S.C. Code is amended to read:

 Section 56-1-50. (A) A person who is at least fifteen years of age may apply to the department for a beginner’s permit. After the applicant has passed successfully the knowledge examination, the department may issue to the applicant a beginner’s permit. A beginner’s permit entitles the permittee having the permit in his immediate possession to drive a motor vehicle on public highways under the conditions contained in this section for not more than twelve months.

 (B) The permit is valid only in the operation of:

 (1) vehicles after six o’clock a.m. and not later than midnight. Except as provided in subsection (E), while driving, the permittee must be accompanied by a licensed driver twenty-one years of age or older who has had at least one year of driving experience. A permittee may not drive between midnight and six o’clock a.m. unless accompanied by any licensed individual listed in Section 56-1-100(A)(1‑7);

 (2) motorcycles.

 While driving a motorcycle during nighttime hours, the permittee must be accompanied by a motorcycle-licensed driver twenty-one years of age or older who has had at least one year of driving experience.

 (C) The accompanying driver must:

 (1) occupy a seat beside the permittee when the permittee is operating a motor vehicle; or

 (2) be within a safe viewing distance of the permittee when the permittee is operating a motorcycle or a moped.

 (D) A beginner’s permit may be renewed or a new permit issued for additional periods of twelve months. However, the department may refuse to renew or issue a new permit where the examining officer has reason to believe the applicant has not made a bona fide effort to pass the required driver’s road test or does not appear to the examining officer to have the aptitude to pass the road test. The fee for every beginner’s or renewal permit is two dollars and fifty cents, and the permit must bear the full name, date of birth, and residence address and a brief description and unobstructed photograph of the permittee and a facsimile of the signature of the permittee or a space upon which the permittee shall write his usual signature with pen and ink immediately upon receipt of the permit. A permit is not valid until it has been signed by the permittee.

 (E) The following persons are not required to obtain a beginner’s permit to operate a motor vehicle:

 (1) a student at least fifteen years of age regularly enrolled in a high school of this State which conducts a driver’s training course while the student is participating in the course and when accompanied by a qualified instructor of the course;

 (2) a person fifteen years of age or older enrolled in a driver training course conducted by a driver training school licensed under Chapter 23 of this title. However, this person at all times must be accompanied by an instructor of the school and may drive only an automobile owned or leased by the school which is covered by liability insurance in an amount not less than the minimum required by law; and

 (3) a person who has satisfied the beginner’s permit requirements set forth in law or with sufficient previous driving experience that exempts the person from the beginner’s permit requirements when performing the driving test with a department employee.

 (F) A person who is at least fifteen years of age who has never held a form of license evidencing previous driving experience first must be issued a beginner’s permit and must hold the beginner’s permit for at least one hundred eighty days before being eligible for full licensure as set forth in this title. A person obtaining solely a moped operator’s license pursuant to Section 56-1-1720 is not required to hold a beginner’s permit before operating a moped.

 (G) A person who is eighteen years old or older may attempt the driving test to obtain a regular motor vehicle driver’s license after maintaining a beginner’s permit for at least thirty days. This does not apply to motorcycle permits or permits for vehicles with a gross vehicle weight of 26,001 pounds or more.

 (H) The fees collected pursuant to this section must be credited to the Department of Transportation State Non-Federal Aid Highway Fund.

  (I) A person who holds a motorcycle beginner’s permit who fails the motorcycle driver’s license test three or more times must successfully complete a South Carolina technical college motorcycle safety course, or its equivalent, in lieu of passing the motorcycle driver’s license test, in order to obtain a motorcycle license. All courses must be at least eight hours in length and be taught by an instructor accredited through a training program in which the procedures for accreditation are equivalent to those set forth in “Manual of Rules and Procedures” published by the National Safety Council. All courses must include successful completion of an examination equivalent to the Department of Motor Vehicles motorcycle skills test. These programs are subject to Section 56-1-15.

Severability

SECTION 2. If any section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this act is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid, such holding shall not affect the constitutionality or validity of the remaining portions of this act, the General Assembly hereby declaring that it would have passed this act, and each and every section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, and word thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more other sections, subsections, paragraphs, subparagraphs, sentences, clauses, phrases, or words hereof may be declared to be unconstitutional, invalid, or otherwise ineffective.

Time effective

SECTION 3. This act takes effect six months after approval by the Governor.

Ratified the 8th day of May, 2024.

Approved the 13th day of May, 2024.

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