



A HANDBOOK FOR RESPONSIBLE DRIVING FOR PARENTS AND TEENS



SPONSORED BY THE COLONIE POLICE
COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION

Teen/Family Contract for Safe Driving

We, _____ hereby enter into an agreement covering the use and operation of any vehicle used by _____.

1. **Background.** Congratulations, you have turned 16! This is a major milestone. It provides the opportunity for significantly greater freedom, but this potential freedom requires significantly greater responsibility. Driving an automobile is very expensive and can be very dangerous. The statistics are overwhelming that young adults have substantially more accidents and more serious accidents than any other age group. We love you and are very proud of you. We can not bear the thought of something happening to you, or a family member, or one of your friends riding with you. The purpose of this agreement is to establish rules and expectations regarding your use and operation of an automobile. Driving an automobile is a privilege, not a right. The driver must obey traffic and other applicable laws, including being courteous to other drivers, to maintain the privilege of driving. You must comply with the terms of this agreement to maintain your privilege.

You will be required to pay for the following (write in percent desired)

- ___ % Cost of Vehicle
- ___ % Vehicle Registration
- ___ % Cost of Fuel
- ___ % Maintenance Costs (? see 2)
- ___ % Damage due to abuse
- ___ % Full Insurance Coverage
- ___ % Under-age-25 insurance costs
- ___ % Fines and penalties
- ___ % Collision damage
- ___ % Under-B-Average insurance costs
- ___ % Costs due to driving record
- ___ % Other

2. **The Car.** In the event you are provided with an automobile, or, if you share the family vehicle, we will ensure that it will be in good working condition. We will pay all costs associated with normal maintenance of the car. You will pay all costs associated with any accident that we believe was caused by you and any other costs that could have been avoided through prudent care of the car. It is your responsibility to be aware of the condition of the car and to let us know immediately of any unusual noises, problems, etc. For your information, the cost to repair a car for even a minor "fender-bender" typically exceeds \$500. In your car, you will always have your registration, insurance card, emergency phone numbers, jumper cables and a fire extinguisher.

You will be responsible for the following (check those applicable):

- Check fluids each fuel fill
- Inspect and check tire pressure
- Report unusual performance
- Clear or clean all windows
- Maintain 1/4 tank of gas at all times
- Do normal maintenance
- Wash and wax the vehicle
- Keep interior clean
- Have maintenance done
- Other

3. **Insurance.** Your insurance rates will be established for a driver who gets a good student discount, discount for driver training and any other available discounts, and who has no traffic tickets or accidents. You will pay the cost of any increase in insurance rates, other than normal increases.
4. **Traffic Tickets.** You will obey all traffic laws. You must pay for any traffic tickets, and any citation will result in a reduction in driving privileges. Fines for traffic violations typically range from \$50 to \$200. Penalties for criminal conduct can be more severe. For example, an underage DWI would result in a fine of at least \$350 and a mandatory loss of license.

You will lose your user privileges at least this number of days for each traffic offense or at-fault crash:

- First Offense _____ days
- Preventable Crash _____ days
- Second Offense _____ days
- Serious Violation _____ days
- Third Offense _____ days
- Drugs or Alcohol _____ days

5. **Seat Belts.** You agree to wear a seat belt at all times. You agree to require your passengers to wear a seat belt at all times. You may not take more passengers than the number of seat belts. Seat belts will be fastened before the car moves.
6. **Restricted Activities While Driving.** You agree to devote your complete and undivided attention to driving while operating an automobile. An unusually high number of accidents are caused (or tickets received) when the driver is distracted or engaged in other activities than driving the car. You agree not to eat or drink when driving. You will not change tapes/CDs or "fiddle" with the radio when the car is moving.
7. **Directions.** An unusually high number of accidents are caused (or tickets received) when the driver is uncertain where he or she is going. You need to know where you are going and precisely how you will get there before leaving. If you are ever lost or uncertain, stop and ask for directions at a safe (e.g. good lighting) gas station or similar establishment. Keep your family informed of your destination and approximate time of arrival and departure as well as route taken. Check in frequently and notify your family

of any delays. If you are provided with a car phone, use it only when the car is stopped in a safe place.

8. **Gasoline.** There is no excuse for running out of gas. You agree to keep your gas tank no less than 1/4 full at all times.
9. **User Privileges.** Understand that there is a significant amount of driving and errands that must be performed to keep our family functioning at the level we have chosen. In exchange for the use of a car and other privileges you enjoy you agree to help with family driving and errands. Errands will be performed with a positive, helpful attitude.

Your user privilege will be linked to your grades in school and performance at home and such things as:

- Doing duties at home properly and on time
- Showing proper respect for parents and others
- Complying with family regulations
- Attendance, conduct and effort at school
- Obeying your curfew
- Other (specific to family)

10. **Substance Use.** You agree not to consume alcohol, use illegal drugs or smoke. Violations will result in a loss of driving privileges as well as other restriction. This also pertains to passengers in your vehicle.
11. **Amendments.** We have used our best efforts to cover the issues surrounding the use of an automobile; however, we reserve the right to modify this agreement in the future.
12. I/we are committed to you, and to your health and safety. By signing below, I pledge to do everything in my power to understand and communicate with you about the many difficult and potentially destructive decisions you face. Further I agree to provide for you safe, sober transportation home if you are ever in a situation that threatens your safety and to defer discussion about that situation until a time when we can both discuss the issues in a calm and caring manner. I also pledge to you that I will not drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs, I will always seek safe, sober transportation home, and I will always remember to wear a seatbelt.

You are Legally Responsible for Your Actions as a Driver. We, as your family, agree that we will also abide by the terms of this contract.

We, as vehicle Owners, Are Legally Liable for Damages Done by You as a Driver.

Signed on the _____ day of _____, 20____,

Parent/Guardian _____

Parent/Guardian _____

Son/Daughter _____