

Helping young people in statutory out-of-home care (OOHC) and care leavers up to age 25 get on the road and access the Free Safer Drivers Course

Learning to drive gives young people confidence and opportunities to access education, job opportunities and social networks. Helping young people currently and formerly in statutory care to learn to drive is important. Caseworkers and carers can work together to support young people to obtain their drivers licence.

Learning to drive

Learner drivers need to complete 120 hours of supervised driving (including 20 hours of night driving) and hold their learners licence for a minimum of 12 months prior to gaining their Provisional Licence (P1).

Designated agencies can assist young people reach this goal by ensuring that 'obtaining a provisional drivers licence' is identified as an independent living skill in the young person's Leaving Care Plan.

Safer Drivers Course

Young people in statutory OOHC (and young people who have left statutory OOHC) who have obtained their learners driving permit and completed at least 50 hours of log book driving time are **eligible to enrol** in a Safer Drivers Course under the Roads and Maritime Services disadvantaged learner initiative and complete the course (usually \$140) for **free**.

The Safer Drivers Course helps young drivers on their L's prepare for driving solo when they graduate to provisional licences. As well as becoming safer drivers, learner drivers earn a bonus of 20 hours of log book credit on completion of the course.

The course is made up of two modules: Module one is a three-hour group facilitated discussion on how to manage risk on the road and teaches safe driving behaviour and Module two is a two-hour in vehicle coaching session that aims to reinforce and practise low risk driving strategies, including the safe behaviours explored in Module one.

Modules one and two can be done on the same day or different days (within four weeks).

How to enrol

To be eligible for a free place, a young person in OOHC or a young care leaver must:

- Hold a valid NSW Learner Driver's Licence
- Be aged under 25 years
- Have completed a minimum of 50 log book driving hours
- Provide a *Letter – evidence of OOHC status for Safer Drivers Course*.

Step 1 – nominate a course provider in your area

Young learner drivers and their caseworkers or carers nominate the Safer Drivers Course provider in their area.

Course provider locations can be found online at <http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/cgi-bin/index.cgi?action=safedriverscourseproviders.form>

Step 2 – Obtain evidence of OOHC status

FACS caseworker provides the young person with a completed [FACS Letter – evidence of OOHC status for Safer Drivers Course.](#)

OR

NGO caseworker provides the young person with a completed [NGO Letter – evidence of OOHC status for Safer Drivers Course.](#)

* Caseworkers are to use the published electronic versions of these templates to ensure access to drop down options in these forms and always print on agency letterhead.

Step 3 – Confirm free place on Safer Drivers Course

A caseworker, carer or young person must email safedriverscourse@rms.nsw.gov.au to advise of an OOHC enrolment, providing the young learner driver's:

1. Name
2. Date of Birth
3. Learner Driver's Licence number
4. Scanned copy of the *Letter – evidence of OOHC status for Safer Drivers Course*
5. Nominated course provider and location
6. Provide contact details including an email address.

Step 4 - Confirmation

Roads and Maritime Services will:

1. inform the nominated Course Provider within five days that the learner driver is eligible to attend Safer Drivers Course at **no cost**
2. confirm by reply email to the case manager, carer or young person, that the nominated course provider is aware of the pending enrolment.

Step 5 - Enrol

The young person must contact their nominated course provider **within two months** of receiving confirmation from Roads and Maritime Services to enrol into the Safer Drivers Course. Caseworkers should encourage the young person to enrol as soon as possible once free access has been confirmed.