

Maine Child Passenger Safety Program Manual

A Guide for CPS Technicians and Partners



The Maine Child Passenger Safety Program is federally funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and managed by the Department of Public Safety, Bureau of Highway Safety.

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Maine Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Program recognized and supported by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). NHTSA provides funding to eligible states to educate and assist families regarding safe child transport.

The Bureau's goal is to ensure that a statewide, comprehensive, and integrated Child Passenger Safety Program is in place to serve as a resource for families/caregivers, communities, professionals, agencies, and organizations. The Bureau is continually working to improve its Child Passenger Safety Program by developing consistent guidelines and procedures that focus on program quality, effectiveness, efficiency, and communication that address the needs of State of Maine residents while also being fiscally responsible.

The Bureau will work to ensure program quality by strengthening its state CPS Technician and Instructor network by identifying technician and/or instructor candidates and supporting them through training opportunities. Also, the Bureau will monitor technician and instructor certification activity and help support recertification with "closer to home" resources, such as car seat sign-off opportunities.

For program effectiveness and efficiency, the Bureau will assess resources and monitor services that are available statewide. Partner activity is encouraged, and new potential partnerships welcomed. Currently our program consists of approximately 35 partner inspection stations and 27 partner distribution sites throughout the state. Whether you are a new program location or are currently participating with us, we appreciate your dedication and commitment to providing safe travel opportunities to Maine children.

While you are free to operate your program in a manner that best fits your needs and those of your community, we ask that you adhere to the manual's procedures and guidelines. Communication is a key component to the CPS Program; technicians and instructors are encouraged to offer feedback on changes that may improve the overall efficiency and effectiveness of program execution.

This manual is a growing and changing document, updated to improve program processes. It is a guide for CPS Technicians and partners. Information is subject to change and may not be all inclusive of program policies.

DISTRIBUTION SITES

Distribution Sites offer proper car seat installation education with hands-on techniques. If income eligibility has been determined, a no-cost car seat may be issued to a child.

Site Training

Sites must have a certified CPS Technician. The Bureau holds certification training annually for individuals wanting to become a federally certified car seat technician. To take a certification course, there is a registration fee payable to Safe Kids Worldwide. For more information, please check the Bureau's website <https://www.maine.gov/dps/bhs/child-passenger-safety/training/index.html>.

Technicians are required to meet recertification requirements within their two-year certification cycle to remain certified for another two-year cycle. Recertification requirements are listed on the Safe Kids website - <http://cert.safekids.org/i-am-a-tech/recertification>.

Partner Distribution and Inspection Sites with a state contract on file with the Maine Bureau of Highway Safety have the option to participate in a "shared-funding" opportunity:

- The Bureau will reimburse the technician recertification fee for technicians who have completed their recertification requirements and have logged their activity into their Safe Kids account at least two weeks prior to expiration.

Site Technician/Manager

The Distribution Site will designate a manager to make administrative decisions for car seat education and distribution. The Bureau recommends the technician and manager roles remain separate to encourage stronger site support and communication. Contact the Bureau when site managers/technicians change, leave, or have a change in duties that render them unable to continue program activities.

Online Database

Distribution Sites must have internet access and a computer to utilize the statewide database. The database provides a more informed service with traceable car seat distribution history. Tracking usage prevents potential waste of program resources. Distribution sites should be uploading information to the MeBHS website database for any distribution appointments. For inspection appointments, all information should be uploaded to the National Digital Check Form (NDCF) found here: <https://carseatcheckform.org/>

Ordering Car Seats

Distribution Sites can log in to their distribution database account and order car seats monthly.

To fill an order:

- Car seat orders must not exceed the database distribution reporting totals.
- Site orders larger than the number of car seats distributed must provide justification why.

- State contract is on file at the Bureau of Highway Safety.
- Car seat ordering is available the last week of each month and closes the second Wednesday of each month. This allows the Bureau staff ample time to process orders.

Procedure

Record retention is dependent on Distribution Site requirements. The Bureau requires sites to keep paper versions of any recorded distribution activity during the current reporting year; older paperwork may be scanned.

Accountability is the key to the CPS program's continued funding. The Bureau of Highway Safety will hold meetings, as needed, to discuss documents, reporting requirements, and paperwork retention.

Sites:

- Provide select copies of records for periodic review:
 1. Signed Liability Waiver and Release forms
 2. Completed Maine Child Passenger Safety Seat Checklist forms **OR** the National Digital Car Seat Check Form online
- Online CPS database entries, to be submitted within one business day after a car seat(s) is distributed
- Provide car seats to income eligible children that provide proper proof of the family participation with one of the following:
 1. eWIC card
 2. Letter from Maine Care indicating program participation
 3. Letter from the TANF or SNAP agency indicating current program participation **OR** a current dated letter of correspondence from either of the agencies to the family, discussing participation
- Once income eligibility is determined, parents/caregivers must also provide, non-expired, visual proof of Maine residency:
 1. State of Maine Driver's License
 2. State of Maine Identification
 3. Maine Tribal Identification
 4. Letter of Refugee Resettlement by Catholic Charities accompanied by the Refugee's photo and I-94 number
 5. Fostering license/certification
 6. High School Photo Identification card
 - a. Pregnant teens that are too young for obtaining a driver's license will need a family member to bring a vehicle to the car seat distribution appointment.
- Provide another car seat to the same child if:
 1. The child has outgrown the initial car seat issued, and the family can provide proof they are still eligible.
 2. The family no longer has the car seat issued to the child because of a crash, theft, or fire; and can furnish a crash report, police report for stolen property, or fire report. Reporting must be within two weeks of the incident.
- Mark **BHS** on the back of program car seats using a white paint marker. Have site users agree to sign a waiver acknowledging participation in the program.
- Will **NOT** distribute:

1. Car seats to expectant mothers any sooner than 30 days before their due date **OR** at the technician's discretion.
 - a. Pregnant women expecting multiple children must provide a doctor's note stating multiple births are expected (twins, triplets, etc.)
 2. More than one seat, per child, per family
 3. Additional seats to extended and/or immediate family members
- Will not limit distribution of car seats exclusively to site clients; all eligible individuals must have equal access to seats regardless of their status as a client or non-client of the participating site.
 - Will not distribute program seats to other distribution or inspection station sites, or non-qualified individuals, without prior approval from the Bureau.

Education

The most critical step to providing car seat assistance is that it is only provided by a certified CPS Technician.

Technicians educate caregivers on how to secure car seats properly, and will provide the following education/assistance to all caregivers for child recipients:

- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration recommendations.
- Maine Law M.R.S.A Title 29-A §2081 (<http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/29-A/title29-Asec2081.html>).
- Determine the proper safety restraint for the child based on the child's height, weight, and age. Explain to the caregivers why the chosen seat is appropriate for the child.
- Show the caregivers how to place the child correctly in the seat.
 - Use the car seat owner's manual – show the recipient where the instructions are located.
 - Have the caregiver demonstrate their ability.
 - Correct any errors and have them redo it until you are satisfied.
- Show the caregiver how to install the car seat properly in the vehicle, use caregiver's vehicle, when possible.
 - Refer to the car seat manual and vehicle manual.
 - Demonstrate how to install the seat in the vehicle or on a training seat.
 - Have the caregiver demonstrate their ability in the vehicle.
 - Correct any errors and have them redo it until you are satisfied.
- Remind the caregiver to keep the instructions with the car seat and, when possible, assist the caregiver with mailing in a completed registration card that accompanies each seat. The seat manufacturer will notify caregivers directly in the event the seat is recalled.
- Encourage the caregivers to call with any questions or concerns. Be sure to give them a business card if you have one.

If a caregiver refuses to sign the liability waiver and release form or resists your instruction regarding safety seat use and installation, simply state that due to liability issues, you cannot provide a safety seat without educating first.

Promoting Your Program within Your Organization

Your CPS involvement will largely depend on your ability to enlist and maintain the support of your organization's leaders. Be sure to meet with administrators at least once per year to discuss your site's successes and future goals.

INSPECTION SITES

Inspection Sites must have a certified technician available, at least by appointment, to assist parents/caregivers with proper car seat installation and education. Income eligible seats are not distributed at Inspection Sites.

Site Training

Sites must have a certified CPS Technician. The Bureau holds certification training annually for individuals wanting to become a federally certified car seat technician. To take a certification course there is a registration fee, payable to Safe Kids Worldwide. For more information, please check the Bureau's website <http://www.maine.gov/dps/bhs/child-passenger-safety/training/index.html>.

Technicians are required to meet recertification requirements within their two-year certification cycle to remain certified for another two-year cycle. Recertification requirements are listed on the Safe Kids website - <http://cert.safekids.org/i-am-a-tech/recertification>.

Partner Distribution and Inspection Sites with a state contract on file with the Bureau of Highway Safety have the option to participate in a "shared-funding" opportunity:

- The Bureau will reimburse the Technician recertification fee for technicians who have completed their recertification requirements and have logged their activity into their Safe Kids account at least two weeks prior to expiration.

Site Technician/Manager

The Inspection Site will designate a manager to make administrative decisions for inspections. The Bureau recommends the technician and manager roles remain separate to encourage stronger site support and communication. Contact the Bureau when site managers/technicians change, leave, or have a change in duties that render them unable to continue program activities.

Procedure

Record retention is dependent on Inspection Site requirements. The Bureau requires sites to keep paper versions of any recorded inspection activity during the current reporting year; older paperwork may be scanned.

Accountability is the key to continued CPS program funding. The Bureau of Highway Safety will hold meetings as needed to discuss documents, reporting requirements, and paperwork retention.

Sites:

- Provide select copies of records for periodic review
 - Completed National Digital Car Seat Check Form(NDCF).

- The National Digital Check Form can be found here:
<https://carseatcheckform.org/>
 - Defect notices/Misuse Forms
 - Parental Release Form for News Interviews/Photographs, as needed
- Provide a safe location for car seat inspection and education
- Inspect car seats for all individuals requesting the service without regard to race, creed, color, or religion

Promoting Your Program within Your Organization

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CAR SEAT CHECK EVENTS

The Bureau of Highway Safety is actively involved in developing and funding statewide car seat check events in high visibility locations.

The Bureau solicits certified Technicians that live and work in areas closest to car seat check events first; this allows opportunity for Technicians to achieve requirements for recertification.

Events offer an opportunity to educate the public and raise CPS awareness. Technicians are encouraged to contact the Bureau of Highway Safety to inquire whether funding is available to support an event at a specific location or in a specific community. Requests must be made to the Bureau at least three weeks before the planned event date.

Event Procedure

- The Bureau or other CPS Instructors or Technicians will notify Technicians prior to the event to ask for their attendance and participation.
- One paid Instructor per event.
 - Instructor is responsible for completing and submitting an Event Summary form and submitting event checklists, defect notices (if any), stipends, and other expense forms to the Bureau within 30 days following the event.
 - If an Instructor can't fulfill the assigned job of overseeing the car seat check event, then they must notify the Bureau of Highway Safety within 72 hours of the scheduled event so other arrangements can be made. If there is no advanced notice of event withdrawal by the Instructor, the Bureau may not consider future involvement with the Instructor.
- The Bureau of Highway Safety will compensate a Technician for their time and reimburse mileage and tolls, with supporting documentation, if their employer is not already paying time and travel costs.
 - Roundtrip mileage is \$0.46/mile; the Bureau must preapprove trips that exceed 75 miles roundtrip. Driving time is not reimbursable.
 - Tolls must have receipts submitted.

- For reimbursement, Technicians are required to attend events for a minimum of two hours.
- Instructors traveling from distances over 50 miles one-way to the event site have the option of hotel accommodations with the Bureau providing reimbursement.
- To ensure the utmost safety, Technicians/Instructors participating in an event are not allowed to bring their children or other family members.
- Residents participating at events need to be asked to turn off their vehicles while they wait for assistance. Idling vehicles may pose a health and safety risk to those participating in the event.
- Donations of any kind are not allowable at Bureau of Highway Safety events. Instructors and Technicians need to explain there is no accounting system in place to accept money.
- Event locations are to provide car seat education and installation only; issuing Bureau of Highway Safety program car seats is not allowable at events. Technicians must refer income eligible residents to an area Distribution Site to obtain a program seat.

Timeframe

Events expected to exceed four hours need to be pre-approved by the Bureau.

Advertising

Host locations are asked to advertise the car seat check event by placing an ad in the newspaper, posting information on the host location website, Facebook page, and/or in their newsletter. If provided event information, the Bureau will post to our website.

Event hosts are encouraged to speak with local schools concerning a potential community service opportunity for students. Student volunteers may greet vehicles and provide informational materials, checklists, and a writing utensil to event participants.

Event Kit

An event kit containing some necessary equipment (see below) may be available for use. Sites may need to provide other supplies as necessary.

Educational material (CPS brochures) if available
Forms (event summary, checklists, defect notices, stipend forms)
Latch Manual
Locking clips, if available.

SPECIAL NEEDS SEATS

Special Needs Restraints and Car Beds

On occasion, families may ask Technicians how they may obtain a special needs car seat when their insurance company has denied their request. Following are a few options Technicians may want to recommend to families:

1. Contact the Department of Health and Human Services, Children with Special Health Needs Program to ask if assistance may be available; or
2. Have the family's physician:
 - a. Provide a referral to an Occupational/Physical Therapist to fit the child for a car seat with an appropriate fit and function.
 - b. The therapist must draft a letter detailing the car seat that the child needs, with an explanation of why; and,
 - c. The family doctor and therapist need to find a medical supply vendor that can provide the needed car seat and the vendor will contact the insurance company directly. *

**Sometimes there may be an issue with an overweight special needs child. A car seat through a medical supply vendor may be classified as durable medical equipment.*

TECHNICIANS ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR CHOOSING THE CORRECT SPECIAL NEEDS CAR SEAT FOR A CHILD. THIS DECISION IS FOR THE CHILD'S THERAPIST OR THE CHILD'S PHYSICIAN.

RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Certified Technicians and Instructors must fulfill certain recertification requirements every two-years to maintain status and avoid expiration. Recertification requirements are located on the Safe Kids website - <http://cert.safekids.org/ImATech/Recertification.aspx>.

Technicians are encouraged to frequently visit the Safe Kids website and access their Safe Kids account on a regular basis to make any contact information changes or to enter CPS activities.

RECALL LISTS

Technicians will need to reference recall information to provide a more comprehensive service to site users.

- Recall information:

<http://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/recalls/childseat.cfm>

http://www.hsrb.unc.edu/safety_info/child_passenger_safety/hsrb_child_restraint_recalls.pdf

ROVING INSTRUCTOR AND MOCK SCENARIO STANDARDS

If a Technician has been unable to obtain all their necessary seat signoffs and are close to expiration, they may contact the Maine Bureau of Highway Safety for assistance. If possible, the Bureau will attempt to facilitate a Roving Instructor to meet with the Technician at their facility. When an Instructor roves to a facility, seat signoffs may require mock scenarios.

Roving Instructor

- Technicians needing seat checks/signoffs need to commit approximately two hours for the Roving Instructor.
- Technicians need to provide a list to the Instructor of seats they need checked/signed-off.
- An Instructor will travel to the Technician at the facility they represent.
- Best-case scenario, a caregiver should be present receiving the service.
- Technicians should try to schedule appointments with the public to coincide with the Instructor visit.

Mock Scenario Standards

Scale of Preference:

1. Best Procedure – GREATLY ENCOURAGED
 - Up to five installations are required;
 - Two to three of the five installations are live, except for the booster seat;
 - Instructor assumes the role of caregiver for remaining scenarios; and
 - Technician completes a checklist for each live installation.
2. Second Best Procedure
 - Up to five installations are required;
 - Technician needing installation uses a colleague or friend to assume the role of caregiver;
 - Two to three live installations are encouraged but not required; Instructor assumes the role of caregiver for remaining scenarios; and
 - Technician completes a checklist for each live installation.

3. Least Desirable Procedure

- Five installations are required;
- All five installations are mock scenarios;
- Instructor assumes the role of caregiver; and
- Technician completes a checklist for at least one installation.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Disposal of Unsafe or Expired Seats

It is important that Technicians share information concerning safety seats and limited life expectancy with site users. Factors of climate, the amount of abuse sustained while in use, crashes, and storage conditions, all influence how long a seat is safe to use. Many seat manufacturers print expiration dates on their car seats.

When a safety seat is deemed unsafe or expired, it needs to be made unusable. This will prevent someone from picking it up and using it again. Techniques for destroying a safety seat include:

- Sawing the seat in half
- Crushing the seat
- Removing all padding and destroying the straps, then writing with a marker “DANGER, SEAT NOT SAFE TO USE”.

If a child safety seat is in a **serious** crash, it must be destroyed, even if it does not appear to be damaged. NHTSA guidelines allow for reuse of seats that have been involved in **minor** crashes. We recommend the definition developed by NHTSA be followed. According to NHTSA, a minor crash is one which all the following apply:

- A child safety seat visual inspection, including under any easily movable seat padding, does not reveal any cracks or deformation that might have been caused by the crash.
- The vehicle which the child safety seat was installed was capable of being driven from the crash scene.
- The vehicle door nearest the child safety seat was undamaged.
- There were no injuries to any of the vehicle occupants.
- The air bags (if any) did not deploy.

According to NHTSA, crashes that meet all the above criteria are much less severe than the dynamic testing requirement for compliance with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) 213 and are highly unlikely to affect future child safety seat performance. Therefore, caregivers can be confident that child restraints involved in these minor crashes will continue to provide a high level of protection.

For those situations where any of these criteria have not been met, or if there is uncertainty whether seat damage has occurred, NHTSA advises parents/caregivers to contact their automobile insurance company regarding its policy on seat replacement.

The maximum life span of a safety seat varies. Six years is a generally accepted limitation for safety seats. However, please refer to the manufacturer’s recommendations.

Keeping Up with Child Passenger Safety Issues

The following websites are just a few excellent resources to share or reference:

- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov>
- Bureau of Highway Safety <https://www.maine.gov/dps/bhs/>
- National Child Passenger Safety Board <http://cpsboard.org/>
- Safe Ride News <http://www.saferidenews.com>
- American Association of Pediatrics www.aap.org
- Safe Kids Worldwide www.safekids.org
- National Digital Car Seat Check Form <https://carseatcheckform.org/>
- National Digital Check Form Tutorial Videos <https://www.cpsboard.org/ndcf/tutorial-videos/>
- National Digital Check Form Digital User Guide <https://www.cpsboard.org/ndcf/digital-user-guide/>