



LAWS OF ALASKA

1973

Source

Chapter No.

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AN ACT

Establishing a point system for traffic-law violations.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

* Section 1. AS 28.15 is amended by adding new sections to read:

Sec. 28.15.282. POINT SYSTEM. (a) For the purpose of identifying habitually reckless or negligent drivers and habitual or frequent violators of traffic laws, the commissioner of public safety shall promulgate, under the Administrative Procedure Act (AS 44.62), regulations establishing a uniform system for the suspension, revocation, limitation, or denial of a motor vehicle operator's license issued under this chapter by assigning demerit points for convictions of violations of traffic laws which are required to be reported to the department under sec. 190 of this chapter. The commissioner of public safety shall adopt other regulations necessary to carry out the purposes of this chapter.

(b) The regulations adopted under (a) of this section shall include a designated level of point accumulation which identifies drivers who are habitually reckless or negligent or who are habitual or frequent violators of traffic laws, so as to show a disrespect for traffic laws and a disregard for the safety of other persons. In formulating the point system authorized by this section, the commissioner of public safety shall, in the interest of interstate uniformity, provide for suspension, revocation or denial of a motor vehicle operator's license for an accumulation of 12 or more points as a result of offenses committed during any consecutive 12-month period or 18 or more points as a result of offenses committed during any 24-month period.

(c) The commissioner of public safety may assess points for convictions in other states of offenses which, if committed in this state, would be grounds for the assessment.

(d) Notice of each assessment of points may be given, but notice shall be given when the point accumulation reaches 50 per cent of the number at which suspension is authorized. The commissioner of public safety shall provide by regulation for a mandatory interview with a driver, who is identified as a problem driver, to be conducted upon the accumulation of not less than six points. The purpose of such an interview is to assist the person who is identified as a problem driver in overcoming substandard driving habits. An interview required under this subsection is not a substitute for a driver improvement interview and is to be conducted in an informal manner. A driver shall be required to comply with any recommendations designed to improve his driving abilities which are made to him during the interview.

(e) No points may be assessed for violating a provision of a state law or regulation, or a city or borough ordinance regulating standing, parking, equipment, size or weight; nor may points be assessed for violations by pedestrians, passengers or bicycle riders, or for violations of provisions relating to the preservation of the condition of traffic-control devices on the highway. Points shall be assessed for violations of oversize or overweight permits pertaining only to restrictions upon speed or hours of operation.

(f) If a licensee is convicted of two or more traffic violations committed on a single occasion, the licensee shall be assessed points for one offense only and, if the offenses involved have different point values, the licensee shall be assessed for the offense having the greater point value.

(g) The time periods provided for in this section for the accumulation of points shall be based upon the date of violation, but points may not be assessed until after conviction, either upon a plea of guilty or nolo contendere or as a result of a trial, for violation of the traffic laws.

(h) Only for purposes of assessing points under this section, a plea of nolo contendere accepted by the court or the forfeiture of any bail or collateral deposited to secure a defendant's appearance in court, as evidenced by records forwarded to the department in accordance with provisions of sec. 190 of this chapter, is considered a conviction.

(i) No points assessed under authority of this section may be retained for more than two years after the date of their assessment for purposes of suspension, revocation, limitation, or denial of a motor vehicle operator's license issued under this chapter. Two points shall be deducted from the assessed total if the operator has not been convicted of a violation of the traffic laws for 12 months after his last conviction. In addition, two points shall be deducted from the assessed total upon the operator's

furnishing to the department adequate proof of successful completion of a driver improvement course approved by the department. No more than one course may be used to obtain a reduction in points in any 12-month period.

(j) In this section "traffic laws" means statutes, regulations, and local ordinances governing the operation or movement of vehicles.

Sec. 28.15.283. SUSPENSION, REVOCATION, LIMITATION, DENIAL. The department shall suspend, revoke, limit, deny, or initiate other remedial action against the driving privilege of a person, upon his failure to appear for a mandatory interview or driver improvement interview under sec. 284 of this chapter, or upon a driver improvement interview and a failure to request a hearing as provided in sec. 285 of this chapter, or if a hearing is requested, upon conclusion of the hearing, when his driving record identifies him as a habitually reckless or negligent driver or as a habitual or frequent violator under sec. 282 of this chapter.

Sec. 28.15.284. DRIVER IMPROVEMENT INTERVIEW. (a) When the department's records show that a licensee has accumulated a sufficient number of points to be subject to license suspension, revocation, limitation, denial, or other action under secs. 282 or 283 of this chapter, the department shall notify the licensee to appear for a driver improvement interview on a date not less than 10 days after the date of the notice. The notice shall contain a statement setting out the proposed departmental action and the grounds for that action. The notification shall be given to the licensee in writing by registered mail, addressed to the address of the licensee as shown by the records of the department.

(b) The interview ordered by the department shall be held at the office of the department nearest to the residence of the licensee, unless the department and the licensee agree that the interview is to be held elsewhere. An interview delay shall be granted by the department only if the licensee presents the department with good cause for the delay. If an interview is delayed, the department shall set a new date for the interview no later than 30 days after the date of the original interview.

(c) If a licensee fails to appear for a driver improvement interview at the time and place stated by the department in its notice to the licensee and if the licensee has not been granted an interview delay, his failure to appear is considered a waiver of the driver improvement interview and the department may take appropriate action against the licensee's motor vehicle operator's license.

Sec. 28.15.285. CONDUCT OF DRIVER IMPROVEMENT INTERVIEW; FINDINGS; REQUEST FOR FORMAL HEARING. (a) A driver improvement interview shall be conducted in an informal manner before a driver improvement examiner sitting as a referee. The licensee shall have the right to make an oral or written answer or statement in which he may controvert any point or issue and present evidence or arguments for the consideration of the department pertinent to the action to

be taken or the grounds for the action. The department may consider its records relating to the licensee. The driver improvement interview is not a formal agency hearing.

(b) Upon the conclusion of a driver improvement interview, the department's referee shall make findings on the matter under consideration and prepare and submit recommendations to the department. After a review of the referee's report and the department's records, the department shall render its decision concerning the matter under consideration and shall notify the person involved of its action in writing by registered mail. The decision is effective upon receipt of the notice. The person upon receiving the notice may, in writing and within 10 days, request a hearing under sec. 286 of this chapter.

Sec. 28.15.286. HEARING. (a) Upon receipt of a request for a hearing the department shall determine the time and place, and shall serve upon the licensee, in the same manner as provided for in sec. 284(a) of this chapter, a notice of hearing at least 10 days before the hearing. Hearings ordered by the department shall be held at the office of the department nearest to the residence of the licensee, unless the department and the licensee agree that the hearing is to be held elsewhere. A hearing delay shall be granted by the department only if the licensee presents the department with good cause for the delay. If a hearing is delayed, the department shall set a new date for the hearing no later than 30 days after the date of the original hearing.

(b) A hearing shall be conducted by the commissioner or by a referee or hearing board appointed by him from administrative employees of the department.

(c) The person conducting the hearing may administer oaths and may issue subpoenas for the attendance of witnesses and the production of books, papers and records and may apply to the district court for the enforcement of a subpoena by contempt proceedings and may require a reexamination of the licensee under the provisions of sec. 250 of this chapter. A licensee may be represented by counsel, may present any relevant evidence, and shall be given full opportunity to confront and cross-examine all witnesses testifying against him. The proceedings at the hearing shall be recorded.

(d) If at the hearing it appears that the record of the licensee sustains suspension, revocation, limitation, denial, or other remedial action, the person conducting the hearing shall so order and the department shall immediately suspend, revoke, limit, deny, or take other action against the license and the license shall then be surrendered to the department if required. If at the hearing it appears that the record of the licensee does not sustain suspension, revocation, limitation, denial, or other action, the person conducting the hearing shall so order and the department may not suspend, revoke, limit, deny, or take other action against the license and shall adjust the licensee's accumulated point total accordingly.

(e) The points assessed and the application of them

against the licensee by the department under sec. 282 of this chapter are in addition to, and not in substitution for, other provisions of this chapter and are not a substitute for any penalty imposed by a court.

(f) No suspension, revocation, limitation, denial of, or other action against a motor vehicle operator's license under secs. 282 - 288 of this chapter may be for more than one year.

(g) If a person's license is suspended or revoked upon the accumulation of the number of points which require that action under secs. 282 - 288 of this chapter and regulations adopted under those sections, no limited license may be issued to that person during the period of suspension or revocation.

(h) Under secs. 282 - 288 of this chapter, the term "licensee" includes an applicant for a new license if his license was revoked under secs. 282 - 288 of this chapter.

Sec. 28.15.287. JUDICIAL REVIEW UNDER POINT SYSTEM. A person whose motor vehicle operator's license is suspended, revoked, limited, or denied under sec. 286 of this chapter may initiate a proceeding in the district court to rescind the department's action by filing a notice of appeal in accordance with the applicable rules of the court governing appeals in civil matters. The hearing on the appeal shall be de novo.

Sec. 28.15.288. STAY OF DEPARTMENT ACTION PENDING HEARING OR APPEAL. Any decision by the department suspending or revoking a person's driving privilege shall be stayed and does not take effect while a hearing is pending or during the pendency of a subsequent appeal to the court. However, the stay is effective only as long as there is no conviction of a moving violation during the pendency of a hearing or appeal.

* Sec. 2. AS 44.62.330(23) is amended to read:

(23) Department of Public Safety, as to suspension, revocation, cancellation or limitation of driver's licenses, except as to revocations and suspensions under AS 28.35.031 - 28.35.034 and except as to suspensions, revocations, limitations, or denials under AS 28.15.282 - 28.15.288