

# At a Glance – Proposals for strengthening Alberta’s approach to impaired driving

## Alberta’s approach

- This proposed legislation does not prevent responsible Albertans from having a drink with dinner or friends.
- Instead, it targets repeat offenders in particular.
- Alberta does not believe that fines are the solution. Our proposals do not include fines or new demerit point offenses.
- Instead, our focus is on safer roads. An Alberta approach will focus on changing behaviours through mandatory courses and ignition interlock.
- Alberta will focus on Criminal Code offences, repeat offenders and new drivers.
- Education and enforcement will both be key to an Alberta approach.

## Quick Facts and stats

- 22% of drivers involved in fatal collisions have consumed some alcohol. (Alberta Traffic Collision Information System)
- 96 deaths and 1,384 injuries occurred in alcohol-related collisions in 2010. (Alberta Traffic Collision Information System)
- Impaired driving charges take up an estimated 40% of all trial time of Crown Prosecutors in Alberta’s courts. (Alberta Justice)

## Other jurisdictions

- 8 jurisdictions have already passed laws imposing tougher sanctions for drivers with blood alcohol between .05 and .08 (Saskatchewan starts at .04)
- Every Canadian jurisdiction, other than Quebec, already gives at least 24-hour roadside suspensions to drivers suspected of being impaired or having .05 to .08 blood alcohol.

## Key proposed actions

### **For drivers with blood alcohol over .08:**

History: Alberta’s mandatory ignition interlock has proven effective for repeat offenders, drivers with blood alcohol more than double the legal limit (over .16) and those refusing breathalyzers. Alberta now has license suspensions but no vehicle seizures for drivers above .08.

- Immediate licence suspension which is sustained until criminal charge is resolved.
- 1<sup>st</sup> offence – sustained licence suspension and 3-day vehicle seizure.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offence – sustained licence suspension, 7-day vehicle seizure.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offence – sustained licence suspension, 7-day vehicle seizure.
- Mandatory ignition interlock after criminal conviction (over .08) – 1 year for 1st offence; 3 years for 2<sup>nd</sup> offence; 5 years for 3rd offence.

### **For drivers with Blood Alcohol .05 to .08:**

History: While Alberta currently can suspend drivers suspected of being under the influence, the new rules would specify increasing sanctions. **These drivers are not and will not be subject to Criminal Code prosecutions.**

- 1<sup>st</sup> offence - 3-day licence suspension and 3-day vehicle seizure.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offence - 15-day licence suspension, 7-day vehicle seizure, “Planning Ahead” course.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offence - 30-day licence suspension, 7-day vehicle seizure, “Impact” course.

### **For new drivers:**

History: Alberta will continue to allow Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) to begin at the age of 14. All GDL drivers are already subject to zero tolerance for blood alcohol and would receive a 30-day suspension.

- GDL driver found with blood alcohol – 30-day licence suspension and 7-day vehicle seizure.
- Novice drivers - nighttime driving restrictions, only one teenage passenger unless it’s a family member or unless a fully licensed driver over 18 is supervising. These changes will target problem area drivers in first 6 months after graduation from Learner to Probationary driver.