

DRIVER EDUCATION

NEWSLETTER

QUARTER 1 | January/February/March

Driver Education Program Updates:

Winter weather has arrived in Iowa! As we encounter snow and ice, make sure to visit the [Iowa DOT website](#) for winter travel information and educator resources such as:

- [Driving maneuvers](#)
- [Snowplow safety tips](#)
- [Winter driving tip sheet](#)
- [Winter survival kit](#)

If you are looking for multimedia or PowerPoints to use in the classroom, please contact the Driver Education Manager, Vania Boyd, at vania.boyd@iowadot.us.

Winter Survival Kit

Pack a winter survival kit to keep in your vehicle. Suggested items include:

- Jumper cables
- Blankets
- Candles/matches
- Water
- Extra clothing/boots
- Snow shovel/ice scraper
- High-calorie, non-perishable foods
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- First-aid kit
- Strips of carpet for traction

[Iowa DOT video on building a Winter Survival Kit](#)

Winter Driving: Tips for Teens

Winter driving can be stressful for the most experienced drivers, but with guidance and practice, we can prepare our teens to feel more confident behind-the-wheel during the winter season.

Discuss Winter Driving Basics

- Stress the value of checking the forecast and road conditions before leaving. *Will they need more time to travel? Is the weather bad enough to stay home?*
- Remind students on driving basics like slowing down when roads are slippery (visibility could be limited) and leaving extra space between your car and the vehicle ahead.
- Watch out for snowplows! *"Please remember that snowplows are generally driving much slower than people expect and be mindful to give us extra room while we are working to clear the way for you,"* says Jason Fisher, Maintenance Training Coordinator for the Iowa DOT.
- Check the gas gauge before every trip. *Is there enough fuel to reach their destination? Do they have a winter car kit?*

Practice, Practice, Practice

Teach students to defrost windows and how to check their vehicle for things like:

- Tire tread and pressure.
- Fluid levels (coolant and washer fluid).
- Ensure battery is charged.
- Replace worn wiper blades.
- Make sure all lights are working.

Emphasize the need to leave extra space between the car ahead.




Iowa Donor Network

Did you know that you can request a speaker from Iowa Donor Network to come to your classroom? Iowa Donor Network has a robust network of volunteers, recipients, and donor families that are always excited to share their donation story and donation education.

REQUEST A SPEAKER

Webinar: Organ and Tissue Donation in the State of Iowa

 Thursday, March 6
5-6 p.m.

Hosted by Iowa Donor Network

This webinar will cover how organ and tissue donation in Iowa is made possible and will provide a fuller picture of the impact of donation within the state.

It will be tailored to driver's education instructors and owners, with the hope that you will be better equipped to talk to your students about donation.

REGISTER FOR WEBINAR

Driver Education Instructor Meetings

The Iowa DOT is excited to announce our new quarterly 2025 Driver Education Instructor meetings! These meetings offer a valuable opportunity to stay informed on important topics and are designed for all behind-the-wheel instructors, classroom instructors, driver education program leaders, and related stakeholders.

Meetings will be held on Microsoft Teams and will be recorded for future viewing. Meetings are not mandatory but highly encouraged.

REGISTER FOR MEETINGS

Winter Driving Tips from the Iowa State Patrol

The [Iowa State Patrol](#) recommends these tips when traveling on roadways when winter weather conditions may be present:

- **Keep windshields clear** – Scrape snow and ice to ensure full visibility.
- **Increase following distance** – Allow five to six seconds of time between you and the vehicle you're following, especially snowplows.
- **Be patient** – Allow more time, and daylight when possible, to get to your destination. Remember that detouring through a median can cause problems.
- **Always pay attention to the road** – Traffic flow can change in an instant, and braking times increase dramatically with snow or ice.
- **Add braking time to exit freeways and interstates** – Exits and overpasses get slick during winter events and require even more braking time.
- **Know when to skip cruise control** – Don't use cruise control on snow and ice.
- **Prepare a winter survival kit** – A winter survival kit will help you endure an emergency or road closure until help arrives.
- **Turn on headlights** – It's critical to be seen on snowy and foggy days.
- **Stay up to date on weather, road conditions, and closures** – Before you head out, check live road conditions, closures, and more at [511ia.org](#).

Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau Updates

- GTSB is excited to re-launch [Drive Smart Iowa](#), a website designed for Iowa drivers. You'll find traffic safety PSAs and educational resources.
- The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) provides PSAs for a variety of program areas, including [Teen Driver Safety](#). These resources are free and available for all traffic safety advocates.
- GTSB partners with [MADD and The Power of YOU\(th\)](#). The program equips teens with tools to resist peer pressure and empowers them to take the next step and influence friends to make the right choices.
- [A recent article from Cambridge Mobile Telematics](#) says drivers in rural states are nearly 11% more distracted than drivers in urban states. On Dec. 9, Iowa organizations announced the creation of a new [distracted driving coalition](#) aimed at passing a hands-free while driving law.
- GTSB's Grant Application process will open on January 27, 2025, for FFY 2026 (October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026). [Learn more about our grants](#).

CURRENT IOWA TRAFFIC FATALITIES

The Iowa DOT provides a daily report of Iowa traffic fatalities organized by year, month, type, and county.