



|                                   |                |          |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------|
| TITLE                             | POLICY NUMBER  |          |
| Car Seat Maintenance and Disposal | DCS 02-17      |          |
| RESPONSIBLE AREA                  | EFFECTIVE DATE | REVISION |
| Business Operations               | 02/28/19       | 3        |

**I. POLICY STATEMENT**

The Department of Child Safety (DCS) recognizes the need to ensure that its child safety seats (referred to as car seats in this policy) are in good condition, readily available, utilized properly, and deployed in compliance with current industry safety standards.

**II. APPLICABILITY**

This policy applies to all child safety seats/child restraint systems used in DCS vehicles.

**III. AUTHORITY**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <a href="#">49 CFR § 571-213</a>                               | Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards - Child Restraint Systems                             |
| <a href="#">A.A.C. R2-15-203</a>                               | Operator Responsibilities  |
| <a href="#">A.R.S. 8-453</a>                                   | Powers and duties  |
| <a href="#">A.R.S. § 28-907</a>                                | Child restraint system; civil penalty; exemptions; notice; child restraint fund; definitions |
| <a href="#">National Highway Traffic Safety Administration</a> | Car Seats and Booster Seats  |
| <a href="#">Statewide Motor Vehicle Safety Policy</a>          | Arizona Department of Administration   |

#### IV. DEFINITIONS

Booster seat: A seat that correctly positions the seat belt by "boosting" the child so the lap and shoulder belts fit properly. It is generally for children who weigh more than 50 pounds, are less than 12 years old, and less than four feet, nine inches tall.

Car seat (rear facing): A crash-tested seat, device, or child restraint system that is specially designed to provide protection by facing the rear of the vehicle. This includes infant carriers designed for premature or low-birthweight babies who are below the lower weight threshold for many car seats.

Child restraint system: An add-on child restraint system, a built-in child restraint system, a factory-installed built-in child restraint system, a rear-facing child restraint system, or a booster seat.

Convertible seat: A seat designed for children weighing up to 65 pounds that features a top harness strap at or above the child's shoulders. It is placed in a reclined, rear-facing position for as long as possible until the child reaches the upper weight limit or until they are too tall (usually between 2 and 3 years of age), at which point it can be turned forward and placed in the upright position in the back seat of the vehicle.

Department or DCS: The Department of Child Safety.

Recalls: Voluntary or required actions taken by manufacturers in conjunction with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to correct problems or deficiencies after products have been distributed or sold.

#### V. POLICY

##### A. Ordering Car Seats

If practicable, car seats required for the Department's needs shall be acquired in one bulk purchase to facilitate the Department's ability to oversee their registration, usage, and replacement. Alternatively, car seats may be ordered on an as-needed basis.

##### B. Standards of Car Seat Usage

1. The Department shall comply with all manufacturer instructions regarding the use of car seats or any other type of child restraint system designed to

enhance safety during vehicular transportation.

2. DCS owned and registered car seats are to be used solely in DCS vehicles; they shall not be given or loaned to parents, out of home care providers, or any other caregivers. Conversely, car seats provided by parents, out of home care providers, or other caregivers shall not be used in DCS vehicles.
3. Passenger under six years of age in a DCS vehicle shall be secured in a convertible seat unless they are large enough to use a booster seat. Child passengers must always ride in the rear seat of the vehicle.
4. Each passenger in a DCS vehicle who exceeds the height and/or weight limit of a convertible seat and is under 12 years of age and less than 4 feet, 9 inches tall shall be secured in a booster seat in the rear seat of the vehicle.
5. If DCS staff is unsure about the above requirement, or if a child is frail or small of stature, they shall use a booster seat for safety and caution.
6. Any child safety seats that are donated to the Department shall be forwarded, unopened and unused, to Placement Administration for distribution.

#### C. Inventory

Vehicle stewards shall be responsible for registering car seats with the manufacturer. Car seats may be tagged as property of DCS but will not be logged as assets in the Arizona Financial Information System.

#### D. Storage

1. Car seats shall be stored in offices.
2. If car seats must be temporarily stored in vehicles for any reason, they must be properly secured to a seat.

#### E. Training

All staff who transport children shall take the Child Car Seat Safety (CH40010) computer-based training. There will be an annual recertification. Additionally, the Department shall designate two individuals to take the National Child Passenger Safety Instructor Technician training.

Organizations that provide car seat training may be invited by Department offices to train staff on proper use.

F. Replacement

1. If practicable, prior to all of the car seats reaching their expiration dates simultaneously, the Department shall arrange for another bulk purchase to replace them. Alternatively, car seats may be ordered on an as-needed basis.
2. DCS shall replace car seats that have been in any vehicle crash, even if a child was not in the car seat during a crash.

G. Disposal

Expired or damaged car seats shall be disabled to prevent use and disposed of, or sent for recycling.

## VI. PROCEDURES

A. Ordering Car Seats

1. Procurement Support Services shall ensure there is an approved contract in place to facilitate the purchasing of car seats and issue the final purchase order.
2. The Car Seat Coordinator (previously Procurement) shall order new and replacement car seats using approved purchasing procedures to supply DCS offices with a sufficient number of car seats. The Car Seat Coordinator may be contacted via email at [OfficeofPrevention@azdcs.gov](mailto:OfficeofPrevention@azdcs.gov).
3. Vehicle Stewards shall register each car seat on the manufacturer's website and maintain a record of such registration. The information registered shall include the model number, date of manufacture, serial number, and expiration date.

B. Vehicle Steward and Vehicle Operator Responsibilities

1. Vehicle Stewards/Designated Staff shall:

- a. ensure vehicles in their location have a sufficient supply of car seats;
- b. oversee the cleanliness and maintenance of car seats;
  - i. remove and launder car seat padding on a monthly basis;
  - ii. use a cleansing wipe prior to and after use; bodily fluids on car seats may require special cleaning and/or replacement.
- c. notify the Car Seat Coordinator of any transfer of car seats from one office to another;
- d. forward updated car seat information to vehicle operators and supervisors as necessary;
- e. report theft, vandalism, or damage to equipment pursuant to the [Unusual Incident Reporting](#) policy.

2. Vehicle Operators shall

- a. ensure that all children are restrained using appropriate lap and shoulder belts or age/weight appropriate child restraints as required by law, when riding in a DCS vehicle;
- b. report all defects, malfunctions, and vehicle accidents involving car seats promptly to Risk Management at [OpRiskManagement@azdcs.gov](mailto:OpRiskManagement@azdcs.gov).

C. Disposal

1. Car Seats Involved in Accidents

If there is an accident involving a state vehicle that contains a car seat, the vehicle steward shall immediately remove the car seat, dispose of it according to C.3 below, and notify the Car Seat Coordinator (previously Procurement) that the car seat has been discarded.

2. Car Seat Recall Notifications

Upon receiving notification of a car seat recall, the Car Seat Coordinator (previously Procurement) will compile a list of serial numbers affected by

the recall and notify each office that has a recalled seat. Specific instructions will vary depending on the recall.

3. Physical Disabling of Car Seats

Expired or damaged car seats will be immediately disabled by cutting the straps to render the car seat inoperable. Vehicle stewards will deliver such car seats to, or have them picked up by, a local organization that recycles them. For questions or assistance, the DCS Office may contact Risk Management at [OpRiskManagement@azdcs.gov](mailto:OpRiskManagement@azdcs.gov).

## **VII. FORMS INDEX**

N/A