

House Bill No. 29

An act relating to driving under the influence; amending s. 322.2616, F.S.; providing for the requirement that certain license suspensions shall remain in effect for a described time period; providing for the assumption of the costs for substance abuse education; providing a definition; providing for the admission of certain minors into county additions receiving facilities under certain circumstances; clarifying the blood-alcohol and breath-alcohol level that is unlawful; providing for a temporary driving permit to become effective after a specified period has elapsed following the issuance of the permit; authorizing the use of a blood test obtained pursuant to certain other investigations to be used for the purposes of s. 322.2616, F.S.; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 322.2616, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

322.2616 Suspension of license; persons under 21 years of age; right to review.—

(1)(a) Notwithstanding s. 316.193, it is unlawful for a person under the age of 21 who has a blood-alcohol or breath-alcohol level of 0.02 percent or higher to drive or be in actual physical control of a motor vehicle.

(b) A law enforcement officer who has probable cause to believe that a motor vehicle is being driven by or is in the actual physical control of a person who is under the age of 21 while under the influence of alcoholic beverages or who has any blood-alcohol or breath-alcohol level may lawfully detain such a person and may request that person to submit to a test to determine his or her blood-alcohol or breath-alcohol level.

(2)(a) A law enforcement officer or correctional officer shall, on behalf of the department, suspend the driving privilege of such person if the person has a blood-alcohol or breath-alcohol level of 0.02 ~~percent~~ or higher. The officer shall also suspend, on behalf of the department, the driving privilege of a person who has refused to submit to a test as provided by paragraph (b). The officer shall take the person's driver's license and issue the person a 10-day temporary driving permit if the person is otherwise eligible for the driving privilege and shall issue the person a notice of suspension.

(b) The suspension under paragraph (a) must be pursuant to, and the notice of suspension must inform the driver of, the following:

1.a. The driver refused to submit to a lawful breath test and his or her driving privilege is suspended for a period of 1 year for a first refusal or for a period of 18 months if his or her driving privilege has been previously suspended as provided in this section as a result of a refusal to submit to a test; or

b. The driver was under the age of 21 and was driving or in actual physical control of a motor vehicle while having a blood-alcohol or breath-alcohol level of 0.02 percent or higher; and the person's driving privilege is suspended for a period of 6 months for a first violation, or for a period of 1 year if his or her driving privilege has been previously suspended as provided in this section for driving or being in actual physical control of a motor vehicle with a blood-alcohol or breath-alcohol level of 0.02 percent or higher.

2. The suspension period commences on the date of issuance of the notice of suspension.

3. The driver may request a formal or informal review of the suspension by the department within 10 days after the issuance of the notice of suspension.

4. A temporary permit issued at the time of the issuance of the notice of suspension shall not become effective until after 12 hours have elapsed and will expire at midnight of the 10th day following the date of issuance.

5. The driver may submit to the department any materials relevant to the suspension of his or her license.

(c) When a driver subject to this section has a blood-alcohol or breath-alcohol level of 0.05 or higher, the suspension shall remain in effect until such time as the driver has completed a substance abuse course offered by a DUI program licensed by the department. The driver shall assume the reasonable costs for the substance abuse course. As part of the substance abuse course, the program shall conduct a substance abuse evaluation of the driver, and notify the parents or legal guardians of drivers under the age of 19 years of the results of the evaluation. The term "substance abuse" means the abuse of alcohol or any substance named or described in Schedules I through V of s. 893.03. If a driver fails to complete the substance abuse education course and evaluation, the driver's license shall not be reinstated by the department.

(d) A minor under the age of 18 years proven to be driving with a blood-alcohol or breath-alcohol level of 0.02 or higher may be taken by a law enforcement officer to the addictions receiving facility in the county in which the minor is found to be so driving, if the county makes the addictions receiving facility available for such purpose.

(3) The law enforcement officer shall forward to the department, within 5 days after the date of the issuance of the notice of suspension, a copy of the notice of suspension, the driver's license of the person receiving the notice of suspension, and an affidavit stating the officer's grounds for belief that the person was under the age of 21 and was driving or in actual physical control of a motor vehicle with any blood-alcohol or breath-alcohol level, and the results of any blood or breath test or an affidavit stating that a breath test was requested by a law enforcement officer or correctional officer and that the person refused to submit to such test. The failure of the officer to submit materials within the 5-day period specified in this subsection does not bar the department from considering any materials submitted at or before the hearing.

(4) If the department finds that the license of the person should be suspended under this section and if the notice of suspension has not already been served upon the person by a law enforcement officer or correctional officer as provided in subsection (2), the department shall issue a notice of suspension and, unless the notice is mailed under s. 322.251, a temporary driving permit that expires 10 days after the date of issuance if the driver is otherwise eligible.

(5) If the person whose license is suspended requests an informal review under subparagraph (2)(b)3., the department shall conduct the informal review by a hearing officer employed by the department within 30 days after the request is received by the department and shall issue such person a temporary driving permit for business purposes only to expire on the date that such review is scheduled to be conducted if the person is otherwise eligible. The informal review hearing must consist solely of an examination by the department of the materials submitted by a law enforcement officer or correctional officer and by the person whose license is suspended, and the presence of an officer or witness is not required.

(6) After completion of the informal review, notice of the department's decision sustaining, amending, or invalidating the suspension of the driver's license must be provided to the person. The notice must be mailed to the person at the last known address shown on the department's records, or to the address provided in the law enforcement officer's report if such address differs from the address of record, within 7 days after completing the review.

(7)(a) If the person whose license is suspended requests a formal review, the department must schedule a hearing to be held within 30 days after the request is received by the department and must notify the person of the date, time, and place of the hearing and shall issue such person a temporary driving permit for business purposes only to expire on the date that such review is scheduled to be conducted if the person is otherwise eligible.

(b) The formal review hearing must be held before a hearing officer employed by the department, and the hearing officer may administer oaths, examine witnesses and take testimony, receive relevant evidence, issue subpoenas, regulate the course and conduct of the hearing, and make a ruling on the suspension. The department and the person whose license was suspended may subpoena witnesses, and the party requesting the presence of a witness is responsible for paying any witness fees and for notifying in writing the state attorney's office in the appropriate circuit of the issuance of the subpoena. If the person who requests a formal review hearing fails to appear and the hearing officer finds the failure to be without just cause, the right to a formal hearing is waived and the suspension is sustained.

(c) A party may seek enforcement of a subpoena under paragraph (b) by filing a petition for enforcement in the circuit court of the judicial circuit in which the person failing to comply with the subpoena resides. A failure to comply with an order of the court constitutes contempt of court. However, a person may not be held in contempt while a subpoena is being challenged.

(d) The department must, within 7 days after a formal review hearing, send notice to the person of the hearing officer's decision as to whether sufficient cause exists to sustain, amend, or invalidate the suspension.

(8) In a formal review hearing under subsection (7) or an informal review hearing under subsection (5), the hearing officer shall determine by a preponderance of the evidence whether sufficient cause exists to sustain, amend, or invalidate the suspension. The scope of the review is limited to the following issues:

(a) If the license was suspended because the individual, then under the age of 21, drove with a blood-alcohol or breath-alcohol level of 0.02 percent or higher:

1. Whether the law enforcement officer had probable cause to believe that the person was under the age of 21 and was driving or in actual physical control of a motor vehicle in this state with any blood-alcohol or breath-alcohol level or while under the influence of alcoholic beverages.

2. Whether the person was under the age of 21.

3. Whether the person had a blood-alcohol or breath-alcohol level of 0.02 percent or higher.

(b) If the license was suspended because of the individual's refusal to submit to a breath test:

1. Whether the law enforcement officer had probable cause to believe that the person was under the age of 21 and was driving or in actual physical control of a motor vehicle in this state with any blood-alcohol or breath-alcohol level or while under the influence of alcoholic beverages.

2. Whether the person was under the age of 21.

3. Whether the person refused to submit to a breath test after being requested to do so by a law enforcement officer or correctional officer.

4. Whether the person was told that if he or she refused to submit to a breath test his or her privilege to operate a motor vehicle would be suspended for a period of 1 year or, in the case of a second or subsequent refusal, for a period of 18 months.

(9) Based on the determination of the hearing officer under subsection (8) for both informal hearings under subsection (5) and formal hearings under subsection (7), the department shall:

(a) Sustain the suspension of the person's driving privilege for a period of 1 year for a first refusal, or for a period of 18 months if the driving privilege of the person has been previously suspended, as provided in this section, as a result of a refusal to submit to a test. The suspension period commences on the date of the issuance of the notice of suspension.

(b) Sustain the suspension of the person's driving privilege for a period of 6 months for driving or being in actual physical control of a motor vehicle while under the age of 21 with a blood-alcohol or breath-alcohol level of 0.02 percent or higher, or for a period of 1 year if the driving privilege of such person has been previously suspended under this section as a result of driving a motor vehicle while under the age of 21 with a breath-alcohol level

of at least 0.02 percent but less than 0.08 percent. The suspension period commences on the date of the issuance of the notice of suspension.

(10) A request for a formal review hearing or an informal review hearing shall not stay the suspension of the person's driver's license. If the department fails to schedule the formal review hearing to be held within 30 days after receipt of the request therefor, the department shall invalidate the suspension. If the scheduled hearing is continued at the department's initiative, the department shall issue a temporary driving permit that is valid until the hearing is conducted if the person is otherwise eligible for the driving privilege. The permit shall not be issued to a person who requested a continuance of the hearing. The permit issued under this subsection authorizes driving for business or employment use only.

(11) A person whose driver's license is suspended under subsection (2) or subsection (4) may apply for issuance of a license for business or employment purposes only, pursuant to s. 322.271, if the person is otherwise eligible for the driving privilege. However, such a license may not be issued until 30 days have elapsed after the expiration of the last temporary driving permit issued under this section.

(12) The formal review hearing may be conducted upon a review of the reports of a law enforcement officer or correctional officer, including documents relating to the administration of a breath test or the refusal to take a test. However, as provided in subsection (7), the driver may subpoena the officer or any person who administered a breath or blood test.

(13) The formal review hearing and the informal review hearing are exempt from chapter 120. The department may adopt rules for conducting reviews under this section.

(14) A person may appeal any decision of the department sustaining a suspension of his or her driver's license by a petition for writ of certiorari to the circuit court in the county wherein such person resides or wherein a formal or informal review was conducted under s. 322.31. However, an appeal does not stay the suspension. This subsection does not provide for a de novo appeal.

(15) The decision of the department under this section shall not be considered in any trial for a violation of s. 316.193, nor shall any written statement submitted by a person in his or her request for departmental review under this section be admissible into evidence against him or her in any such trial. The disposition of any related criminal proceedings shall not affect a suspension imposed under this section.

(16) By applying for and accepting and using a driver's license, a person under the age of 21 years who holds the driver's license is deemed to have expressed his or her consent to the provisions of this section.

(17) A breath test to determine breath-alcohol level pursuant to this section may be conducted as authorized by s. 316.1932 or by a breath-alcohol preliminary alcohol screening test device listed in the United States Department of Transportation's conforming-product list of evidential breath-

measurement devices. The reading from such a device is presumed accurate and is admissible in evidence in any administrative hearing conducted under this section.

(18) The result of a blood test obtained during an investigation conducted under s. 316.1932 or s. 316.1933 may be used to suspend the driving privilege of a person under this section.

~~(19)~~(18) A violation of this section is neither a traffic infraction nor a criminal offense, nor does being detained pursuant to this section constitute an arrest. A violation of this section is subject to the administrative action provisions of this section, which are administered by the department through its administrative processes. Administrative actions taken pursuant to this section shall be recorded in the motor vehicle records maintained by the department. This section does not bar prosecution under s. 316.193. However, if the department suspends a person's license under s. 322.2615 for a violation of s. 316.193, it may not also suspend the person's license under this section for the same episode that was the basis for the suspension under s. 322.2615.

Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2001.

Approved by the Governor June 1, 2001.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 1, 2001.