

Beginning January 1, 2019, the Nebraska Child Restraint law is changing following the passage of LB42. The three main points of the law are:

1. Children ride rear facing until up to age two or until they reach the upper weight or height limit allowed by the car seat manufacturer.
2. Children up to age eight must be correctly secured in a federally approved car seat or booster seat.
3. All children up to age eight must ride in the back seat as long as the back seat is equipped with a seat belt and is not already occupied by other children under eight years of age.

Why are these safety measures important for the safety of your child passengers?

- **A very young child is especially at risk for head and spinal cord injuries because their bones and ligaments are still developing. According to NHTSA, frontal or offset frontal vehicle crashes make up the majority of all collisions. Rear-facing seats allow the force of a crash to be distributed - the car seat and the child moves with the seat reducing the risk for neck and spinal injury. In a forward-facing seat, the harness holds this child's torso, but the head is unrestrained – placing the force of a crash on the child's neck, resulting in head and spinal injuries.**
- **Booster seats raise your child up to position the lap belt across a child's hips/upper thighs and the shoulder belt across a child's chest and collar bones for proper protection.**
- **Children between 6 and 12 are generally not ready for adult safety belts which are designed for a 165 pound adult male. A belt that doesn't fit properly can ride up on a child's stomach and neck and cause internal organ damage or neck/head injuries in a crash.**
- **Studies show that using a booster seat can reduce the risk of injury in a crash by 45% over a seat belt alone.**