

2019 -- H 5081

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LC000202  
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2019

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A N A C T

RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES - ACCIDENTS AND ACCIDENT  
REPORTS

Introduced By: Representatives Lombardi, and Hull

Date Introduced: January 10, 2019

Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Sections 31-26-1 and 31-26-2 of the General Laws in Chapter 31-26  
2 entitled "Accidents and Accident Reports" are hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **31-26-1. Duty to stop in accidents resulting in personal injury.**

4 (a) The driver of any vehicle knowingly involved in an accident resulting in injury to,  
5 serious bodily injury to, or death of any person shall immediately stop the vehicle at the scene of  
6 the accident or as close to it as possible, but shall then immediately return to and in every event  
7 shall remain at the scene of the accident until he or she has fulfilled the requirements of § 31-26-  
8 3. A stop shall be made without obstructing traffic more than is necessary.

9 (b) Any person knowingly failing to stop or to comply with the requirements under  
10 circumstances which result in injury to any person shall upon conviction be punished by a  
11 mandatory loss of license for at least one year and not more than five (5) years and imprisonment  
12 for not more than five (5) years and/or fined up to five thousand dollars (\$5,000).

13 (c)(1) Any person knowingly failing to stop or to comply with the requirements under  
14 circumstances which result in serious bodily injury to any person shall upon conviction be  
15 punished as follows:

16 (i) Every person convicted of a first violation shall be punished by imprisonment for not  
17 less than ~~one year~~ two (2) years and for not more than ten (10) years and by a fine of not less than  
18 ~~one thousand dollars (\$1,000)~~ five thousand dollars (\$5,000), nor more than ~~five thousand dollars~~

1 ~~(\$5,000)~~ ten thousand dollars (\$10,000). The sentencing judge shall have the discretion to  
2 sentence the person to any unit of the adult correctional institutions. Additionally, the license of  
3 the person shall be revoked for a period of up to ~~two (2)~~ five (5) years. The license privilege shall  
4 not be reinstated until evidence satisfactory to the administrator of the division of motor vehicles  
5 establishes that no grounds exist which would authorize refusal to issue a license and until the  
6 person gives proof of financial responsibility pursuant to chapter 32 of this title, and all liens and  
7 judgments are satisfied.

8 (ii) For a second or subsequent conviction under this subsection ~~within a five (5) year~~  
9 ~~period~~, a person shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than ~~two (2)~~ five (5) years nor  
10 more than ~~fifteen (15)~~ twenty-five (25) years and by a fine of not less than ~~three thousand dollars~~  
11 ~~(\$3,000)~~ ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), nor more than ~~ten thousand dollars (\$10,000)~~ thirty  
12 thousand dollars (\$30,000). The sentencing judge shall have the discretion to sentence the person  
13 to any unit of the adult correctional institutions. Additionally, the license of the person shall be  
14 revoked for a period of up to ~~four (4) years~~ ten (10) years. The license privilege shall not be  
15 reinstated until evidence satisfactory to the administrator of the division of motor vehicles  
16 establishes that no grounds exist which would authorize refusal to issue a license and until the  
17 person gives proof of financial responsibility pursuant to chapter 32 of this title.

18 (2) As used in this subsection, "serious bodily injury" means physical injury that creates a  
19 substantial risk of death or causes serious physical disfigurement or protracted loss or impairment  
20 of the function of any bodily member or organ.

21 (d) Any person knowingly failing to stop or to comply with the requirements under  
22 circumstances which result in the death of any person, shall upon conviction be punished  
23 pursuant to the provisions of this subsection as follows:

24 (1) Every person convicted of a first violation of this subsection shall be punished by  
25 imprisonment in the state prison for not less than ~~two (2)~~ five (5) years and for not more than  
26 ~~fifteen (15)~~ thirty (30) years, in any unit of the adult correctional institutions in the discretion of  
27 the sentencing judge, by a fine of not less than ~~five thousand dollars (\$5,000)~~ fifteen thousand  
28 dollars (\$15,000), nor more than ~~ten thousand dollars (\$10,000)~~ fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000),  
29 and his or her license to operate a motor vehicle shall be revoked for a period of ~~three (3)~~ ten (10)  
30 years. The license privilege shall not be reinstated until evidence satisfactory to the administrator  
31 of the division of motor vehicles establishes that no grounds exist which would authorize the  
32 refusal to issue a license, and until the person gives proof of financial responsibility pursuant to  
33 chapter 32 of this title.

34 (2) Every person convicted of a second or subsequent violation of this subsection ~~within a~~

1 ~~five (5) year period~~ shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison for not less than ~~five (5)~~  
2 ~~twenty (20)~~ years and for not more than ~~twenty (20)~~ sixty (60) years, in any unit of the adult  
3 correctional institutions in the discretion of the sentencing judge, by a fine of not less than ~~ten~~  
4 ~~thousand dollars (\$10,000)~~ thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000), nor more than ~~twenty thousand~~  
5 ~~dollars (\$20,000)~~ one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) and his or her license to operate a  
6 motor vehicle shall be revoked ~~for a period of five (5) years. The license privilege shall not be~~  
7 ~~reinstated until evidence satisfactory to the administrator of the division of motor vehicles~~  
8 ~~establishes that no grounds exist which would authorize the refusal to issue a license, and until~~  
9 ~~the person gives proof of financial responsibility pursuant to chapter 32 of this title~~ permanently.

10 (e) This section shall apply in its entirety to any driver of a motor vehicle knowingly  
11 involved in an accident with a person riding a bicycle.

12 **31-26-2. Duty to stop in accidents resulting in damage to vehicle.**

13 The driver of any vehicle knowingly involved in an accident resulting only in damage to  
14 a vehicle which is driven or attended by any person shall immediately stop the vehicle at the  
15 scene of the accident or as close to it as possible, but shall immediately return to and in every  
16 event shall remain at the scene of the accident until he or she has fulfilled the requirements of §  
17 31-26-3. A stop shall be made without obstructing traffic more than is necessary. Any person  
18 failing to stop or comply with these requirements under the circumstances shall be guilty of a  
19 ~~misdemeanor~~ felony and shall be punished by a fine of not less than ~~five hundred dollars (\$500)~~  
20 one thousand dollars (\$1,000), nor more than ~~one thousand dollars (\$1,000)~~ five thousand dollars  
21 (\$5,000), and/or his or her driver's license or operating privilege in the state may be suspended for  
22 a period up to ~~six (6) months~~ one year, and/or he or she may be imprisoned for a period not to  
23 exceed ~~6 months~~ one year.

24 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES - ACCIDENTS AND ACCIDENT  
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- 1           This act would increase the penalties and fines for the various motor vehicle offenses
- 2 involving leaving the scene of an accident.
- 3           This act would take effect upon passage.

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