

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2015

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HOUSE BILL 529
PROPOSED COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE H529-PCS30310-TH-9

Short Title: NC Drivers License Restoration Act.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 2, 2015

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO REPEAL THE PUNISHMENT OF REVOKING A PERSON'S DRIVERS LICENSE FOR COMMITTING CERTAIN DRIVING WHILE LICENSE REVOKED OFFENSES; TO MAKE DRIVING WHILE LICENSE REVOKED A NONMOVING VIOLATION FOR CERTAIN PURPOSES; AND TO MAKE OTHER CONFORMING CHANGES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. This act shall be known as the "North Carolina Drivers License Restoration Act."

SECTION 2. G.S. 20-28 reads as rewritten:

"§ 20-28. **Unlawful to drive while license revoked, after notification, or while disqualified.**

(a) Driving While License Revoked. – Except as provided in ~~subsection~~ subsections (a1) or (a2) of this section, any person whose drivers license has been revoked who drives any motor vehicle upon the highways of the State while the license is revoked is guilty of a Class 3 ~~misdemeanor unless the person's license was originally revoked for an impaired driving revocation, in which case the person is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.~~ misdemeanor.

(a1) Aggravated Driving While License Revoked. – A person convicted under subsection (a) of this section is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor if the person's license was originally revoked for any of the following:

- (1) Except as provided in subsection (a2) of this section, an impaired driving license revocation, as defined in G.S. 20-28.2.
- (2) An accumulation of drivers license points in violation of G.S. 20-16(a)(5).
- (3) A violation of any restriction of G.S. 20-179.3.
- (4) A violation of any restriction of G.S. 20-17.8.
- (5) A violation of a limited driving privilege issued under G.S. 20-20.1.

Upon conviction, the person's license shall be revoked for an additional period of one year for the first offense, two years for the second offense, and permanently for a third or subsequent offense.

If the person's license was originally revoked for an impaired driving license revocation, the court may order as a condition of probation that the offender abstain from alcohol consumption and verify compliance by use of a continuous alcohol monitoring system, of a type approved by the Division of Adult Correction of the Department of Public Safety, for a minimum period of 90 days.

The restoree of a revoked drivers license who operates a motor vehicle upon the highways of the State without maintaining financial responsibility as provided by law shall be punished



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1 as for driving without a ~~license~~ license and punished in accordance with the provisions of this
2 subsection.

3 ~~(a1)~~(a2) Driving Without Reclaiming License. – A person convicted under subsection (a)
4 shall be punished as if the person had been convicted of driving without a license under
5 G.S. 20-35 if the person demonstrates to the court that either subdivisions (1) and (2), or
6 subdivision (3) of this subsection is true:

- 7 (1) At the time of the offense, the person's license was revoked solely under
8 G.S. 20-16.5; and
- 9 (2) a. The offense occurred more than 45 days after the effective date of a
10 revocation order issued under G.S. 20-16.5(f) and the period of
11 revocation was 45 days as provided under subdivision (3) of that
12 subsection; or
13 b. The offense occurred more than 30 days after the effective date of the
14 revocation order issued under any other provision of G.S. 20-16.5; or
- 15 (3) At the time of the offense the person had met the requirements of
16 G.S. 50-13.12, or G.S. 110-142.2 and was eligible for reinstatement of the
17 person's drivers license privilege as provided therein.

18 In addition, a person punished under this subsection shall be treated for drivers license and
19 insurance rating purposes as if the person had been convicted of driving without a license under
20 G.S. 20-35, and the conviction report sent to the Division must indicate that the person is to be
21 so treated.

22 ~~(a2)~~(a3) Driving After Notification or Failure to Appear. – A person shall be guilty of a
23 Class 1 misdemeanor if:

- 24 (1) The person operates a motor vehicle upon a highway while that person's
25 license is revoked for an impaired drivers license revocation after the
26 Division has sent notification in accordance with G.S. 20-48; or
- 27 (2) The person fails to appear for two years from the date of the charge after
28 being charged with an implied-consent offense.

29 Upon conviction, the person's drivers license shall be revoked for an additional period of
30 one year for the first offense, two years for the second offense, and permanently for a third or
31 subsequent offense. The restoree of a revoked drivers license who operates a motor vehicle
32 upon the highways of the State without maintaining financial responsibility as provided by law
33 shall be punished as for driving without a license.

34 ...

35 (c) When Person May Apply for License. – A person whose license has been revoked
36 may apply for a license as follows:

- 37 (1) If revoked under subsection ~~(a)~~(a1) of this section for one year, the person
38 may apply for a license after 90 days.
- 39 (2) If punished under subsection ~~(a1)~~(a2) of this section and the original
40 revocation was pursuant to G.S. 20-16.5, in order to obtain reinstatement of
41 a drivers license, the person must obtain a substance abuse assessment and
42 show proof of financial responsibility to the Division. If the assessment
43 recommends education or treatment, the person must complete the education
44 or treatment within the time limits specified by the Division.
- 45 (3) If revoked under subsection ~~(a2)~~(a3) of this section for one year, the person
46 may apply for a license after one year.
- 47 (4) If revoked under this section for two years, the person may apply for a
48 license after one year.
- 49 (5) If revoked under this section permanently, the person may apply for a
50 license after three years.

1 (c1) Upon the filing of an application the Division may, with or without a hearing, issue
2 a new license upon satisfactory proof that the former licensee has not been convicted of a
3 moving violation under this Chapter or the laws of another state, a violation of any provision of
4 the alcoholic beverage laws of this State or another state, or a violation of any provisions of the
5 drug laws of this State or another state when any of these violations occurred during the
6 revocation period. For purposes of this subsection, a violation of subsection (a) of this section
7 shall not be considered a moving violation.

8 ...
9 (c3) A person whose license is revoked for violation of subsection ~~(a)~~(a1) of this section
10 where the person's license was originally revoked for an impaired driving revocation, or a
11 person whose license is revoked for a violation of subsection ~~(a2)~~(a3) of this section, may only
12 have the license conditionally restored by the Division pursuant to the provisions of subsection
13 (c4) of this section.

14"

15 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 20-28.1(a) reads as rewritten:

16 "(a) Upon receipt of notice of conviction of any person of a motor vehicle moving
17 offense, ~~except a conviction punishable under G.S. 20-28(a1),~~ such offense having been
18 committed while such person's driving privilege was in a state of suspension or revocation, the
19 Division shall revoke such person's driving privilege for an additional period of time as set
20 forth in subsection (b) hereof. For purposes of this subsection, the following shall not be
21 considered a "motor vehicle moving offense":

22 (1) A violation of G.S. 20-28(a).

23 (2) A violation of G.S. 20-28(a2).

24 (3) A violation of G.S. 20-7 for driving a motor vehicle without a regular drivers
25 license."

26 **SECTION 4.** G.S. 20-20.1 reads as rewritten:

27 **"§ 20-20.1. Limited driving privilege for certain revocations.**

28 (a) Definitions. – The following definitions apply in this section:

29 (1) Limited driving privilege. – A judgment issued by a court authorizing a
30 person with a revoked drivers license to drive under specified terms and
31 conditions.

32 (2) Nonstandard working hours. – Anytime other than 6:00 A.M. until 8:00 P.M.
33 on Monday through Friday.

34 (3) Standard working hours. – Anytime from 6:00 A.M. until 8:00 P.M. on
35 Monday through Friday.

36 (4) Underlying offense. – The offense for which a person's drivers license was
37 revoked when the person was charged under G.S. 20-28(a), driving with a
38 revoked license, or under G.S. 20-28.1, committing a motor vehicle moving
39 offense while driving with a revoked license.

40 (b) Eligibility. – A person is eligible to apply for a limited driving privilege under this
41 section if all of the following conditions apply:

42 (1) The person's license is currently revoked under ~~G.S. 20-28(a)~~G.S. 20-28(a1)
43 or G.S. 20-28.1.

44 (2) The person has complied with the revocation for the period required in
45 subsection (c) of this section immediately preceding the date the person files
46 a petition for a limited driving privilege under this section.

47 (3) The person's underlying offense is not an offense involving impaired driving
48 and, if the person's license is revoked under G.S. 20-28.1 for committing a
49 motor vehicle moving offense while driving with a revoked license, the
50 moving offense is not an offense involving impaired driving.

51 (4) The revocation period for the underlying offense has expired.

- 1 (5) The revocation under ~~G.S. 20-28(a)~~ G.S. 20-28(a1) or G.S. 20-28.1 is the
- 2 only revocation in effect.
- 3 (6) The person is not eligible to receive a limited driving privilege under any
- 4 other law.
- 5 (7) The person has not held a limited driving privilege issued under this section
- 6 at anytime during the three years prior to the date the person files the current
- 7 petition.
- 8 (8) The person has no pending charges for any motor vehicle offense in this or
- 9 in any other state and has no unpaid motor vehicle fines or penalties in this
- 10 or in any other state.
- 11 (9) The person's drivers license issued by another state has not been revoked by
- 12 that state.
- 13 (10) G.S. 20-9(e) or G.S. 20-9(f) does not prohibit the Division from issuing the
- 14 person a license.

15 (c) Compliance Period. – The following table sets out the period during which a person
 16 must comply with a revocation under ~~G.S. 20-28(a)~~ G.S. 20-28(a1) or G.S. 20-28.1 to be
 17 eligible for a limited driving privilege under this section:

Revocation Period	Compliance Period
1 Year	90 Days
2 Years	1 Year
Permanent	2 Years

22 ...
 23 (j) Term and Reinstatement. – The term of a limited driving privilege issued under this
 24 section is the shorter of one year or the length of time remaining in the revocation period
 25 imposed under ~~G.S. 20-28(a)~~ G.S. 20-28(a1) or G.S. 20-28.1. When the term of the limited
 26 driving privilege expires, the Division must reinstate the person's license if the person meets all
 27 of the conditions listed in this subsection. The Division may impose restrictions or conditions
 28 on the new license in accordance with G.S. 20-7(e). The conditions are:

- 29 (1) Payment of the restoration fee as required under G.S. 20-7(i1).
- 30 (2) Providing proof of financial responsibility as required under G.S. 20-7(c1).
- 31 (3) Providing the proof required for reinstatement of a license under
- 32 G.S. 20-28(c1).

33 (k) Modification. – A court may modify or revoke a person's limited driving privilege
 34 issued under this section upon a showing that the circumstances have changed sufficiently to
 35 justify modification or revocation. If the judge who issued the privilege is not presiding in the
 36 court in which the privilege was issued, a presiding judge in that court may modify or revoke
 37 the privilege. The judge must indicate in the order of modification or revocation the reasons for
 38 the order or make specific findings indicating the reason for the order and enter those findings
 39 in the record of the case. When a court issues an order of modification or revocation, the clerk
 40 of court must send a copy of the order to the Division.

41 (l) Effect of Violation. – A violation of a limited driving privilege issued under this
 42 section constitutes the offense of driving while license revoked under G.S. 20-28. When a
 43 person is charged with operating a motor vehicle in violation of the limited driving privilege,
 44 the limited driving privilege is suspended pending the final disposition of the charge."

45 **SECTION 5.** G.S. 20-17.8(f) reads as rewritten:

46 "(f) Effect of Violation of Restriction. – A person subject to this section who violates
 47 any of the restrictions of this section commits the offense of aggravated driving while license
 48 revoked under ~~G.S. 20-28(a)~~ G.S. 20-28(a1) and is subject to punishment and license revocation
 49 as provided in that section. If a law enforcement officer has reasonable grounds to believe that
 50 a person subject to this section has consumed alcohol while driving or has driven while he has
 51 remaining in his body any alcohol previously consumed, the suspected offense of driving while

1 license is revoked is an alcohol-related offense subject to the implied-consent provisions of
2 G.S. 20-16.2. If a person subject to this section is charged with driving while license revoked
3 by violating a condition of subsection (b) of this section, and a judicial official determines that
4 there is probable cause for the charge, the person's license is suspended pending the resolution
5 of the case, and the judicial official must require the person to surrender the license. The
6 judicial official must also notify the person that he is not entitled to drive until his case is
7 resolved. An alcohol concentration report from the ignition interlock system shall not be
8 admissible as evidence of driving while license revoked, nor shall it be admissible in an
9 administrative revocation proceeding as provided in subsection (g) of this section, unless the
10 person operated a vehicle when the ignition interlock system indicated an alcohol concentration
11 in violation of the restriction placed upon the person by subdivision (b)(3) of this section."

12 **SECTION 6.** G.S. 20-179.3(j) reads as rewritten:

13 "(j) Effect of Violation of Restriction. – A holder of a limited driving privilege who
14 violates any of its restrictions commits the offense of ~~driving while his license is revoked~~
15 aggravated driving while license revoked under ~~G.S. 20-28(a)~~G.S. 20-28(a1) and is subject to
16 punishment and license revocation as provided in that section. If a law-enforcement officer has
17 reasonable grounds to believe that the holder of a limited driving privilege has consumed
18 alcohol while driving or has driven while he has remaining in his body any alcohol previously
19 consumed, the suspected offense of driving while license is revoked is an alcohol-related
20 offense subject to the implied-consent provisions of G.S. 20-16.2. If a holder of a limited
21 driving privilege is charged with driving while license revoked by violating a restriction
22 contained in his limited driving privilege, and a judicial official determines that there is
23 probable cause for the charge, the limited driving privilege is suspended pending the resolution
24 of the case, and the judicial official must require the holder to surrender the limited driving
25 privilege. The judicial official must also notify the holder that he is not entitled to drive until
26 his case is resolved.

27 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an alcohol screening test may be administered
28 to a driver suspected of violating this section, and the results of an alcohol screening test or the
29 driver's refusal to submit may be used by a law enforcement officer, a court, or an
30 administrative agency in determining if alcohol was present in the driver's body. No alcohol
31 screening tests are valid under this section unless the device used is one approved by the
32 Department of Health and Human Services, and the screening test is conducted in accordance
33 with the applicable regulations of the Department as to the manner of its use."

34 **SECTION 7.** G.S. 20-179(c) reads as rewritten:

35 "(c) Determining Existence of Grossly Aggravating Factors. – At the sentencing hearing,
36 based upon the evidence presented at trial and in the hearing, the judge, or the jury in superior
37 court, must first determine whether there are any grossly aggravating factors in the case.
38 Whether a prior conviction exists under subdivision (1) of this subsection, or whether a
39 conviction exists under subdivision (d)(5) of this section, shall be matters to be determined by
40 the judge, and not the jury, in district or superior court. If the sentencing hearing is for a case
41 remanded back to district court from superior court, the judge shall determine whether the
42 defendant has been convicted of any offense that was not considered at the initial sentencing
43 hearing and impose the appropriate sentence under this section. The judge must impose the
44 Aggravated Level One punishment under subsection (f3) of this section if it is determined that
45 three or more grossly aggravating factors apply. The judge must impose the Level One
46 punishment under subsection (g) of this section if it is determined that the grossly aggravating
47 factor in subdivision (4) of this subsection applies or two of the other grossly aggravating
48 factors apply. If the judge does not find that the aggravating factor at subdivision (4) of this
49 subsection applies, then the judge must impose the Level Two punishment under subsection (h)
50 of this section if it is determined that only one of the other grossly aggravating factors applies.
51 The grossly aggravating factors are:

- 1 (1) A prior conviction for an offense involving impaired driving if:
- 2 a. The conviction occurred within seven years before the date of the
- 3 offense for which the defendant is being sentenced; or
- 4 b. The conviction occurs after the date of the offense for which the
- 5 defendant is presently being sentenced, but prior to or
- 6 contemporaneously with the present sentencing; or
- 7 c. The conviction occurred in district court; the case was appealed to
- 8 superior court; the appeal has been withdrawn, or the case has been
- 9 remanded back to district court; and a new sentencing hearing has
- 10 not been held pursuant to G.S. 20-38.7.

11 Each prior conviction is a separate grossly aggravating factor.

- 12 (2) Driving by the defendant at the time of the offense while his driver's license
- 13 was revoked under ~~G.S. 20-28~~, G.S. 20-28(a1), and the revocation was an
- 14 impaired driving revocation under G.S. 20-28.2(a).

15 ...

16 In imposing an Aggravated Level One, a Level One, or a Level Two punishment, the judge
17 may consider the aggravating and mitigating factors in subsections (d) and (e) in determining
18 the appropriate sentence. If there are no grossly aggravating factors in the case, the judge must
19 weigh all aggravating and mitigating factors and impose punishment as required by subsection
20 (f)."

21 **SECTION 8.** This act becomes effective December 1, 2015, and applies to
22 convictions on or after that date.