

Harmonized Statements for CPS Technicians/Instructors

Last edited: February 2021



Expiration Dates

The MACPS encourages adherence to expiration dates as stated by each car seat manufacturer for its car seats. Expiration dates are provided for some, or all, of the following reasons:

- Because exposure of components to many environmental factors including food, drinks, dirt and debris, cleaners and other contaminants may cause degradation of the seat's effectiveness.
- Because parts of the seat may be lost, installed incorrectly or damaged from potential wear and tear.
- Because instructions or labels may not be available or no longer be legible.
- Because instructions for use may have been updated or enhanced but may not be relevant for older models of the product.
- Because enhancements in technology, design, testing, materials and manufacturing may provide better protection for the child through improvements to performance, increased, ease-of-use, convenience and comfort.

The benefits of expiration dates include:

- Phasing out older seats to ensure that as many of the car seats in circulation as possible benefit from new advancements in safety and technology and incorporate the latest regulatory requirements.
- Discouraging second hand car seat use and helping to move recalled products out of Circulation.

(January 2015)

Accessories / Non-Regulated Products

Never use accessories that are not specifically recommended by your car seat manufacturer for use with your car seat. The safety and performance of your car seat and or the vehicle seat belt may be diminished. Check your instructional manual, consult with customer service or review the website of the manufacturer for your car seat and your vehicle before using any child restraint accessory.

(November 2013)

Recline Angle Indicators

Recline indicators on car seats are set by the individual manufacturer based on protection of the child and performance of the car seat in crash testing. The recline indicator on a car seat should always be followed. If there is a compatibility issue with the recline indicator, the specific car seat manufacturer should be contacted. Never go against the recline indicator without written permission from the car seat manufacturer.

(November 2012)

Harmonized Statements for CPS Technicians/Instructors

Last edited: February 2021



Switchable Retractor and Belt-Positioning Boosters

If the booster seat manufacturer and vehicle manufacturer both permit, the MACPS does not prohibit using the vehicle retractor in the locked mode with a belt-positioning booster. FMVSS 213 test setup uses a “locked” belt for certification testing. Please refer to the instructions of each manufacturer prior to switching the retractor to the locked mode.

(February 2021)

Installing Adjacent Car Seats

The MACPS recommends the following conditions be met when installing car seats next to each other:

- a. Each seat must achieve a tight installation, as described in the instructions and CPS standardized curriculum.
- b. The positions of the car seats on the vehicle seat are not changed by the contact. That is, they still align properly with respect to the seat belt or LATCH anchors that secure them and do not overlap the adjacent car seat.
- c. If the vehicle seat is adjustable front-to-back, both portions of the vehicle seat must be adjusted to the same position so that the anchor points for any single seating position are not staggered.
- d. Only one lower connector is connected to a single lower anchor point unless otherwise allowed by the vehicle manufacturer.
- e. There is no contact or force that would bend or deform any of the car seats.
- f. The lower anchor belt or seat belts used to install each seat do not rub on each other or crossover in a way that they interfere with each other.

While installing child restraint systems in adjacent seating positions, it is possible that the vehicle seat belts cross over each other because of the anchor locations in the vehicle seat bight. Safety of the child restraint is not compromised as long as each of the child restraint systems are installed securely and used according to the manufacturer instructions. Additional attention should be paid to the buckle interaction to assure that the child restraints remain securely buckled.

(August 2016)

Car Seats Gate-Checked or Checked as Luggage

AirplaneMACPS encourages all caregivers to secure children in their own car seats secured correctly on their own airline seat. Caregivers have the option to check with a gate agent to see if there are any adjacent vacant seats to secure a car seat in the case where an airline seat has not been pre-purchased for the child. To check for FAA Certification, please locate the label that has the verbiage “This child restraint is certified for use on aircraft.

Car seats are designed to withstand most motor vehicle crash forces. In general, the MACPS does not consider a gate-checked car seat or a car seat that is checked as luggage to be one that has experienced forces equivalent to a motor vehicle crash. Once the destination is reached, it is recommended to inspect the car seat to make sure no visual damage has occurred and all aspects of the car seat function properly.

(August 2012)

Harmonized Statements for CPS Technicians/Instructors

Last edited: February 2021



Children in Bulky Coats

A harness should not be secured over a bulky coat. Best practice is to first remove the coat, then secure your child, and cover with the coat.

- Wearing bulky coats may provide enough room for your child to wiggle loose.
- In a crash, bulky coat material will compress under the harness load, possibly allowing your child to be ejected.
- Child restraints are designed and tested for use without bulky coats. A bulky coat may alter the ability of the child restraint to perform as intended and not protect your child.

(August 2019)

Car Seats and Recreational Vehicles (RVs)

Recreational Vehicle (RV) Car seats are designed for the FMVSS 213 bench and motor vehicle seats meeting the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard definitions of 'passenger car' and 'multipurpose passenger vehicle'. A 'recreational vehicle' or 'RV' is neither. Standard No. 208 – Occupant Crash Protection Standard, in the section that is specific to recreational vehicles, states that rear designated seats in motor homes are excluded from the rear lap/shoulder belt requirements. While RVs may meet some Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, they are only required to comply with seat belt standards for the front passengers, but not for any rear occupants that may be traveling in Class A, Class C, or Class B RVs. Though these rear occupant seat belts are usually bolted to the floor, the biggest concern is that the wooden seat structure, on which the passenger is sitting will fail and cause injury in a crash. NHTSA does not currently crash test RVs with adults or child occupants. For these reasons, it is not recommended to rely on car seats to protect children while travelling in recreational vehicles.

Our recommendation is to choose a non-motorized tow-able RV, so that children can be restrained properly in the passenger vehicle that is towing the RV. If using a coach, have an adult drive a second car in which the children can ride so they can be restrained properly. Contact your child's car seat manufacturer and your RV manufacturer directly for more information.

(August 2016)

Car Seats and LSVs

Car seats are designed for the FMVSS 213 bench and motor vehicle seats meeting the federal motor vehicle safety standard definitions of "passenger car" and "multipurpose passenger vehicle." In both these definitions, "low speed vehicle" is excluded. While low speed vehicles may meet some federal motor vehicle safety standards, they are not the same standards as passenger cars or multipurpose passenger vehicles, and therefore, car seats may not perform as designed when used in those vehicle types. It is not recommended to rely on car seats to protect children while travelling in low speed vehicles. Most car seat manufacturers prohibit use of car seats in low speed vehicles. Refer to the individual car seat manufacturers for more information.

(March 2011)

Harmonized Statements for CPS Technicians/Instructors

Last edited: February 2021



Over-tightening of Seat Belts When Installing Car Seats

Over-tightening a safety belt could damage the belt path of a car seat and/or its lock-off.* Car seats should be installed according to the manufacturer's instructions. Proper tightness should be confirmed by grasping the car seat with one hand at or near the belt path and pulling on the car seat. There should be no more than one inch of side-to-side or front-to-back movement at the belt path.

(September 2010)

Using Seat Belts With Pre-tensioners to Install Car Seats

Unless the car seat manufacturer instructions state differently, using a safety belt with a pre-tensioner is allowed if allowed by the vehicle manufacturer.

(September 2010)