

**SAFE RIDERS**

# **2025 DISTRIBUTION PARTNER SITE IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE**



**TEXAS**  
Health and Human  
Services

Texas Department of State  
Health Services

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# Program Implementation Guide Introduction

## About This Guide

The Safe Riders distribution partner site **Program Implementation Guide** provides an overview of the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Safe Riders protocols and guidelines. Distribution partners implementing the Safe Riders program in their community must adhere to this guide's operating protocols.

## How To Use This Guide

Safe Riders distribution partner sites should use this guide to implement local Safe Riders child passenger safety (CPS) program activities. This document includes guidelines and strategies for providing CPS education and distributing child safety seats (CSSs).

A new prospective distribution partner site must review the entire guide with all staff and technicians participating in the program before submitting a distribution partner site application. All staff or volunteers must understand the Safe Riders guidelines and local Safe Riders distribution partner site operations protocol. By reviewing with all team members, organizations will set expectations for training, implementation, documentation, tracking, and communication.

## Child Passenger Safety Overview

Motor vehicle traffic fatality is the leading cause of child deaths. In 2022, there were 46,027 traffic fatalities in the U.S.; 1,345 (2.92%) were children ages 14 and younger.<sup>1</sup>

In Texas, unintentional injury, including motor vehicle crashes (MVCs), remain the number one cause of death among children ages 1-14, and there were 417 unintentional fatalities for children ages 14 and younger in 2022.<sup>2</sup> Child safety seats (CSSs) are effective in reducing fatal injury risks by approximately 71% when compared to children unrestrained.<sup>3</sup> However, a substantial number of families use child restraints incorrectly.

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<sup>1</sup> *Age Group Comparisons* (2022). National Safety Council (NSC); injuryfacts.nsc.org. [Motor Vehicle: Age Group Comparisons – Injury Facts](#). Accessed 11/06/2024.

<sup>2</sup> *WISQARS Leading Causes of Death Visualization Tool* (2022). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [WISQARS Leading Causes of Death Visualization Tool](#).

<sup>3</sup> Dennis R. Durbin, Committee on Injury, Violence, and Poison Prevention; Child Passenger Safety. *Pediatrics* April 2011; 127 (4): 788-793. 10.1542/peds.2011-0213.

The most recent national estimates indicate 46% of CSSs had some sort of misuse, increasing a child’s risk of serious injury or death in a crash.<sup>4</sup>

## Evidence-based Strategies

Safe Riders strongly recommends distribution partner site programs focus on parents and caregivers who cannot afford a CSS or need help understanding the importance of properly using a CSS. Safe Riders CPS education increases correct CSS caregiver use when:

- 1) Implemented in a range of settings;
- 2) Provided in a variety of population subgroups; and
- 3) Paired with a free CSS.<sup>5</sup>

The Texas Occupant Restraint laws with enhanced and high visibility enforcement campaigns also demonstrate effectiveness in reducing injury and increasing CSS use.

Programmatically and in collaboration with law enforcement efforts, strategies such as mobile events, CSS inspection stations, and communications and outreach campaigns are proven effective CPS strategies.<sup>6</sup>

Organizations implement the Safe Riders program at the community-level to support evidence-based interventions. Multi-faceted community-based intervention approaches are effective in reducing MVC injury risk and incidence, as well as providing long-term program sustainability.<sup>7,8</sup>

## About Safe Riders

Since the passage of the first Texas seat belt law in 1985, Safe Riders has provided CPS leadership in Texas. The Safe Riders Child Passenger Safety program receives Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) federal funds.

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<sup>4</sup> Greenwell, N.K. (2015, May). Results of the national child restraint use special study. (Report No. DOT HS 812 142). Washington, DS: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

<sup>5</sup> Motor Vehicle-Related Injury Prevention: Use of Child Safety Seats, Distribution and Education Programs. [thecommunityguide.org/sites/default/files/assets/MVOI-ChildSeats-Distribution-Programs.pdf](https://thecommunityguide.org/sites/default/files/assets/MVOI-ChildSeats-Distribution-Programs.pdf). Accessed October 2021.

<sup>6</sup> What Works in Increasing Car Seat and Booster Seat Use (2024, May). U.S. Centers For Disease Control and Prevention. [What Works in Increasing Car Seat and Booster Seat Use | Child Passenger Safety | CDC](#).

<sup>7</sup> Istre GR, McCoy MA, Womack KN, Fanning L, Dekat L, Stowe M. Increasing the use of child restraints in motor vehicles in a Hispanic neighborhood. *Am J Public Health*. 2002;92(7):1096-1099. doi:10.2105/ajph.92.7.1096.

<sup>8</sup> Nilsen P. (2006). The theory of community-based health and safety programs: a critical examination. *Injury prevention: journal of the International Society for Child and Adolescent Injury Prevention*, 12(3), 140–145. [doi.org/10.1136/ip.2005.011239](https://doi.org/10.1136/ip.2005.011239).

Authorized by Texas [Health and Safety Code, Chapter 45](#), Safe Riders is a statewide CPS program dedicated to preventing child deaths and reducing child injuries due to MVCs. For more than 30 years, Safe Riders has successfully implemented the program and continues to build partnerships and expand CPS efforts.

Safe Riders partners with Texas stakeholders to educate families on CPS and distribute CSSs to families in need. In fiscal year 2024 (FY24), Safe Riders and distribution partners distributed 5,727 CSSs to Texas residents in need.

### **Safe Riders Distribution Program Site Goals**

Goal 1: Reduce the number of unrestrained Texas children riding in motor vehicles.

Goal 2: Serve as an education and training resource for distribution partner sites.

Goal 3: Build CPS capacity to additional Texas areas to address CPS disparities.

# Chapter 1: Expectations and Commitment

## Distribution Partner Sites

A Safe Riders distribution partner site will advance CPS efforts in the local community. To effectively implement the program, Safe Riders expects distribution partner site organizations to commit to specific guidelines for the following:

- 1. Frequency and Scope**
- 2. Capacity and Training**
- 3. Program Logistics**
- 4. Program Promotion and Outreach**
- 5. Implementation (Education and Distribution)**

Frequency and Scope of Services – Distribution partner sites must be open to the public and may not exclusively operate as a client-based program for a specific agency or organization. Each distribution partner site must provide at least one monthly CPS educational session with installation assistance during CSS distribution. Service options can be found in [Chapter 2: Implementation](#).

Capacity and Training – Safe Riders requires each distribution partner site have two child passenger safety technicians (CPSTs) on staff, and the CPSTs must serve as the program’s primary and secondary points of contact. CPST instructors (CPSTI) are permitted to serve in this role. One CPST will serve as the designated distribution partner site lead and will manage and coordinate Safe Riders and its various components. Only CPSTs can conduct CSS education with distribution services at the local distribution partner site. Distribution partner site primary and secondary contacts must attend Safe Riders mandatory quarterly trainings. Safe Riders will send advanced notice of the mandatory trainings to distribution partner sites.

Distribution partner sites may collaborate with other CPSTs in the community to assist with education and distribution. The distribution partner site is responsible for all aspects of education, distribution, inventory, and reporting regardless of external partnerships. Distribution partner sites will be responsible for replacing seats that are lost or unaccounted-for, regardless of external partnerships.

Distribution partner site agencies must keep their CPST staff certified. If a site loses a CPST, they should immediately inform Safe Riders and provide an action plan. In this instance, distribution partner sites may continue providing services with one technician after the site reaches an agreement with Safe Riders on the time frame until another

CPST is hired. If a distribution partner site needs six or more months, the site will meet with Safe Riders to discuss options.

**Logistics** – Distribution partner sites must submit monthly Safe Riders reports, return phone calls, schedule appointments, conduct regular educational sessions with CSS distribution, order Safe Riders CSSs, track CSS inventory, attend Safe Riders trainings, maintain CPST certification(s), etc. Safe Riders can provide technical assistance to support local efforts and sustainability.

**Promotion and Outreach** – Distribution partner sites must work collaboratively with local stakeholders to promote Safe Riders program services. Promotion includes posting distribution partner site information on websites and through social media; sharing with local coalitions; and conducting outreach to stakeholders, schools, day cares, churches, etc. If a distribution partner site needs assistance with promotion and outreach, they should notify Safe Riders as soon as possible.

Safe Riders is committed to working with distribution partner sites to implement education and distribution activities to support CPST and program sustainability.

Safe Riders expects distribution partner sites to communicate any changes in their local program (e.g., staff changes, referral phone numbers, registration sites, frequency of services, etc.) to stakeholders, parents, and caregivers as soon as possible and appropriate. Sites should include staff changes to Safe Riders staff. Any changes to distribution partner sites contacts, referral phone numbers, registration links, or site locations must be documented using the appropriate **form**. This form can also be accessed on **Basecamp**.

Similarly, Safe Riders will communicate program updates via email or through a meeting. All new distribution partner sites must sign the Safe Riders “Agreement to the Terms and Conditions of the Program” as part of the application.

## Chapter 2: Implementation

Safe Riders distribution partner sites have flexibility to conduct CPS services and distribute CSSs in a way that meets their community's needs and fits their organization's needs and capacity.

### CPS Education and CSS Distribution Guidelines

Only certified CPSTs can provide CPS education to families. [Appendix A](#) includes an education training outline for distribution partner site use. The Safe Riders [website](#) and [Basecamp](#) resource site also provide the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia videos and General CPS Partner Education slide deck for distribution partner sites to use as a family education tool. A distribution partner site may only give parents or caregivers a CSS after they receive the proper education.

### Education and Distribution Options

The CPST must offer consistent CPS education with distribution each month by appointment. Service options include:

1. **Virtual Class** – The distribution partner site holds virtual platform trainings (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams). Families must make a separate appointment to pick up a CSS within one week of receiving the virtual CPS education. **CPSTs must provide hands-on CSS installation assistance in the family's vehicle at pick-up. GOOD OPTION**
2. **In-person Class** – The distribution partner site holds classroom education (can include a slideshow presentation, a video presentation, demonstration, and/or CPST-led discussion with CSS distribution and installation immediately after the class). **CPSTs must provide hands-on CSS installation assistance in the family's vehicle.** Safe Riders recommends a maximum 5:1 ratio for in-person classes – five attendees for every one CPST. **BETTER OPTION**
3. **Inspection Station/Checkup event** – The distribution partner site provides one-on-one car-side education to families who schedule appointments. Car-side education includes hands-on CSS installation assistance in the family's vehicle. This option is for sites that have adequate CPSTs, time, and space. **BEST OPTION**

Distribution partner sites should follow best practice guidelines when providing inspection station and checkup events:

- Schedule appointments in advance;
- Complete an inspection station checklist form for each appointment. Agencies can use their own checklist with their own liability statement or download a template from [Basecamp](#);
- Schedule family appointments with enough time to thoroughly educate each parent or caregiver. An example of amount of time that may be needed:
  - For 1 child, block at least a 30-minute appointment;
  - For 2 children, block at least a 45-minute appointment; or
  - For 3 or more children, block at least a 1-hour appointment.
- Certified CPSTs should work alongside other technicians when providing car-side education to families.

Safe Riders requires distribution partner sites to collect an attendee list at each educational session. For virtual education, distribution site partners should download an attendee list from the platform used (i.e., Zoom, Microsoft Teams). Distribution partner sites should store the attendee lists for five years.

## Chapter 3: Logistics

### CSS Delivery, Storage, and Tracking

#### Selecting a Storage Site

Distribution partner sites must have a secure storage space large enough to hold approximately 10-20 CSSs. The storage space location must have controlled or limited access, security features in place, and be climate-controlled to prevent possible weather or environmental damage (e.g., water, fire, rodents, etc.)

Some distribution partner sites receive donated space from churches, schools, or community centers. Distribution partner sites may opt to store CSSs at an off-site retail storage facility with security features. Programs cannot store CSSs at private residences.

#### CSS Storing Requirements and Tips

- Distribution partner sites must notify Safe Riders of storage location and report any changes in their storage location.
- Safe Riders requires distribution partner sites to mark **“Not for Sale”** clearly and visibly in permanent marker on every CSS shell prior to distributing them to families.
- Distribution partner sites must store the oldest CSSs at the front of the storage space. This helps make sure the oldest CSSs get distributed first and decreases the risk of CSSs expiring before distribution.
- Safe Riders recommends keeping each CSS in the original shipping boxes. Distribution partner sites can also remove seats from boxes and stack them (this method takes up less space.) If an agency decides to stack the CSSs, Safe Riders asks the agency to keep at least half of the original shipping boxes to ship or move seats as needed.
- When storing boxes and seats, Safe Riders recommends not stacking boxes or CSSs too high as they may tip over and result in staff injuries or damage to the CSSs.

#### Requesting Additional Seats

Distribution partner sites should place CSS orders for three to four months of inventory at a time with a 10-seat minimum order. Distribution partner sites can submit new requests once the site’s CSS inventory is running low. To request additional CSSs,

distribution partner sites must submit a Safe Riders CSS request form found on [Basecamp](#) to [distributionreports@dshs.texas.gov](mailto:distributionreports@dshs.texas.gov). Distribution partner sites must be in good standing with monthly reporting and have no outstanding concerns or unresolved issues to receive additional seats. Safe Riders will fill CSS requests based on program inventory and cannot guarantee to fill all requests. See [Appendix B](#) for CSS options.

Safe Riders will work with each distribution partner site to determine CSS quantities needed. Distribution partner sites should anticipate approximately three weeks for a CSS delivery. Distribution partner sites will provide a shipment address and any necessary details regarding delivery (point of contact, acceptable delivery times, location of a loading dock, etc.) with each CSS order placed. Once the shipment is in route, Safe Riders cannot permit address changes.

### CSS Shipments

Safe Riders ships CSSs at no cost to approved distribution partner site locations. Delivery drivers will deliver boxes on pallets at an entry door of the distribution partner site's facility. Further movement within the facility is the responsibility of the distribution partner site agency, so sites must plan accordingly and have people available to move boxes into the storage space. Distribution partner sites may want to consider renting, borrowing, or purchasing a dolly to facilitate moving shipments.

### CSS shipment arrival

1. Distribution partner sites must count the CSSs (boxes of seats) to verify the order is complete before signing for the shipment. Usually there are multiple seats per box. When reviewing the order, the distribution partner site should check for any damage that occurred during the delivery process or incomplete orders.
2. Distribution partner sites must email a CSS delivery confirmation to [distributionreports@dshs.texas.gov](mailto:distributionreports@dshs.texas.gov).
3. For incomplete orders or damaged CSSs, distribution partner sites should email [distributionreports@dshs.texas.gov](mailto:distributionreports@dshs.texas.gov) to report the issue. Distribution partner sites should take any damaged CSSs out of service until Safe Riders gives further instruction. Distribution partner sites should **not** dispose of any damaged CSSs until Safe Riders confirms the appropriate action(s).

Safe Riders expects distribution partner sites to begin offering classes within two weeks of receiving all necessary training and the first CSS delivery.

## Tracking CSSs

**All distribution partner sites must keep an accurate CSS inventory and document CSS numbers added or removed from the storage area.** Distribution partner sites should choose a method for tracking CSS inventory and collect the following information:

- Date each CSS was added or removed from storage;
- Number of CSSs added or removed from storage by seat type;
- Name of person(s) who added or removed CSSs; and
- Total CSS inventory in the storage area.

Distribution partner sites must conduct regular physical CSS inventory counts every month to confirm reporting accuracy.

**Safe Riders CSSs are the property of the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). Distribution partner sites agree to distribute CSSs on behalf of Safe Riders. Safe Riders expects distribution partner sites to replace lost or missing seats. Failure to replace missing CSSs will result in distribution partner site suspension or dismissal.**

## Chapter 4: Program Promotion and Referrals

### Promotion

Safe Riders distribution partner sites must adequately promote the program to be successful. Safe Riders will assist by referring eligible families to distribution partner sites.

Safe Riders encourages distribution partner sites to promote the program through local community stakeholders, social media, and traffic safety coalitions. Safe Riders has English and Spanish promotional event flyer templates available in the Safe Riders [website](#) toolkit and on [Basecamp](#). See [Appendix C](#) for additional Safe Riders resources.

Promotional options include:

- Post the Safe Riders flyer in and around the agency;
- Email the Safe Riders flyer to other agencies that refer clients;
- Hand out program flyers to interested families;
- Cross-promote when working on other projects or programs (e.g., WIC offices, community events, during other safety initiatives);
- Send out a media advisory using the Safe Riders media template;
- Post a Safe Riders flyer on social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, and X);
- Share DSHS content (Safe Riders social media posts, handouts, flyers);
- Ask to speak about Safe Riders at a local coalition or board meeting; and
- Promote services within the organization so other staff can refer families to the distribution partner site.



Safe Riders encourages distribution partner sites to continuously seek out new and innovative opportunities to promote the program.

If a program is developing their own promotional materials (e.g. – flyers, social media posts, PSAs) **and** using the Safe Riders approved logotype, distribution partner sites

must submit a draft document for DSHS review and approval. DSHS will need at least four weeks to review and approve.

## Referrals

Safe Riders maintains a toll-free number (1-800-252-8255). Safe Riders staff are available to assist families with CPS questions and make referrals to distribution partner sites.

Distribution partner sites must have a phone number and voicemail message informing families they are calling a Safe Riders distribution partner site. Safe Riders recommends distribution partner sites provide families with a direct line to the program, if possible. If the distribution partner site does not have a direct line, the agency must train everyone answering the phone to know the Safe Riders distribution program inquiry and referral intake process.

The distribution partner site referral phone number provided to Safe Riders should be the same phone number parents and caregivers call for services. Distribution partner sites must respond to families within two to three business days. A parent or caregiver must be the one to call and schedule an appointment and receive the education. Social workers, other family members, and family friends may not make an appointment or attend a class on behalf of the parent, caregiver, or legal guardian.

Distribution partner sites should email [saferriders@dshs.texas.gov](mailto:saferriders@dshs.texas.gov) if the site is unable to accept referrals for a particular month. This may happen if classes are full, there are changes in class frequency, or there is turnover in staff. Distribution partner sites must also notify Safe Riders if sites are overwhelmed with referrals and are having trouble meeting the demand, or if there are changes to program contacts, referral number, registration sites, or class location.

## Voicemail Communication

At a minimum, the distribution partner site's outgoing voice message should include:

- The distribution partner site's name;
- Bilingual caller instructions for what information to include in a voicemail (e.g., name, phone number, and email address);
- *Preferred, but not required, for the outgoing voice message:*
  - When the caller can expect a return call; and
  - If applicable, a website callers can visit to make an appointment.

If staff are unable to return phone calls for more than three (3) consecutive days, the distribution partner site must email [saferiders@dshs.texas.gov](mailto:saferiders@dshs.texas.gov). Distribution partner sites are still responsible to respond to voicemails for the program upon return.

### Making CSS Appointments

Eligible parents and caregivers must schedule an appointment. This allows the distribution partner site staff to gather accurate child information ahead of time, schedule enough CPST support, and bring the appropriate CSSs and equipment. Distribution partner sites should use the eligibility screening tool ([Appendix A](#)) when scheduling appointments.

Distribution partner sites should consider keeping a waiting list when registration is full to help fill vacancies when families cancel. A waiting list can also highlight opportunities to host additional classes. Distribution partner sites should not make appointments for educational classes or inspection stations more than two (2) months in advance to avoid no-shows.

When scheduling appointments, distribution partner sites should advise caregivers to make an appointment for all children needing a CSS, otherwise the program cannot guarantee additional seats for children who arrive without an appointment. Communicating with caregivers about this before making an appointment will help the visit run smoothly and avoid delays.

Distribution partner site staff should be familiar with the Safe Riders program guidelines for answering phone calls. Collect the following information when making appointments:

- The parent or caregiver's name;
- The child's name, age, height, and weight;
- City and zip code;
- Phone number and email address; and
- Any special health care needs of the child/family.

## Chapter 5: Eligibility for Families Receiving a CSS

The Safe Riders program provides CSSs at no cost to **low-income families or families experiencing financial hardship**. More than one child in a family may receive a CSS, but families may only receive one seat per child. Once a child outgrows a seat or if their CSS gets damaged, a distribution partner site can provide another seat.

### Eligibility Requirements

- Families that communicate financial hardship and are unable to purchase their own CSS are generally **eligible for a seat** unless there are indications otherwise (families self-declare). See ineligibility section below.
- Someone in the household must have a vehicle or say they need a seat to regularly transport their child (e.g., carpool to school or doctor appointments).
- One of the child's primary caregivers must schedule an appointment and attend an educational session to receive a CSS. Other family members or caseworker(s) cannot make an appointment on behalf of the child's primary caregiver.
- Expectant mothers may schedule an appointment once they are in their **last trimester**. A parent/caregiver may not take a class early in their pregnancy and return later to pick up the CSS.

Distribution partner sites are not obligated to fulfill CSS requests for a family already at the hospital for delivery or before discharge, as this falls outside of Safe Riders scope. For these requests, distribution partner sites may provide other community resources for use after discharge.

**Distribution partner sites must verify eligibility when scheduling an appointment with each parent or caregiver.**

### Ineligibility

All families are eligible to receive CPS education. However, not all parents and caregivers are eligible to receive a Safe Riders CSS, so distribution partner sites should have other local referral options available for ineligible families. Families not eligible for a Safe Riders CSS include:

- Non-Texas residents;
- Families who can afford to purchase a seat or already have an appropriate CSS for the child (self-declare);

- Families who only need help learning how to use and install their own seat;
- Families who want a second CSS for a child (i.e., parent wants a second CSS for a second vehicle);
- Family members (e.g., grandparents) that are not a primary caregiver/legal guardian of the child; or
- Pregnant mothers not in their third trimester.

## Chapter 6: Other Transportation Needs

### Social Workers, Case Workers, and Agencies that Transport Children (**Example: Day care centers**)

Safe Riders helps parents and caregivers transport their own children in their own vehicles. Safe Riders does not have the capacity to provide CSSs to agencies or businesses that transport children. Distribution partner sites should ask agencies to refer families to the Safe Riders program for assistance.

#### Premature Infants

Generally, Safe Riders does not have rear-facing only CSSs for infants weighing less than 5 pounds and/or less than 19 inches in height. Parents of premature children should purchase a rear-facing only CSS, borrow one from a trusted source, seek another local resource for assistance, or email [Saferiders@dshs.texas.com](mailto:Saferiders@dshs.texas.com) for a referral. Safe Riders has rear-facing only guidelines to help distribution partner sites assess if an infant qualifies for a rear-facing only CSS. These guidelines can be found on [Basecamp](#).

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends infants born at less than 37 weeks gestation be monitored in a CSS by the hospital prior to discharge to assess for apnea, bradycardia, or oxygen desaturation. The AAP publication “Safe Transportation of Preterm and Low Birth Weight Infants at Hospital Discharge” can be found at [Safe Transportation of Preterm and Low Birth Weight Infants at Hospital Discharge | Pediatrics | American Academy of Pediatrics](#).

#### Children with Special Transportation Needs

Many times, a child with a disability can ride in a conventional CSS. If the child’s technician assessment determines the disability prevents them from riding in a conventional seat, the distribution partner site can refer the family to their medical specialist/provider or a local children’s hospital program for an initial evaluation. Distribution partner sites should contact [saferriders@dshs.texas.gov](mailto:saferriders@dshs.texas.gov) for provider location assistance to accommodate the family.

## Chapter 7: Qualtrics Reporting and Documentation

**Each distribution partner site must submit a monthly report.** Each month, Safe Riders will send an email with a Qualtrics reporting form link that distribution partner sites must complete on the previous month's activities. Distribution partner sites must complete and submit reports no later than the fifth of the following month.

Safe Riders asks distribution partner sites to submit a cost estimate of car seat storage space (annual or monthly) used as in-kind for the Safe Riders program upon acceptance as a distribution partner site. Distribution partner sites will report CSS inventory, distribution tracking, and in-kind staff hours monthly.

Safe Riders uses this information to track each distribution partner site's progress, report monthly totals to the Safe Riders grant funder, TxDOT, and validate each program.

Timely reporting avoids any potential CSS delivery delays. Send any reporting questions to [distributionreports@dshs.texas.gov](mailto:distributionreports@dshs.texas.gov).

**Please complete monthly report no later than the fifth day of the following month. Each monthly report will be for the previous month's activities.**

## Chapter 8: Compliance

DSHS expects each distribution partner site to comply with all Safe Riders guidelines as outlined in this document and in the agreement form submitted with the application. By doing this, sites remain in good standing with Safe Riders.

### Good Standing Criteria

Safe Riders definition of “good standing” requires a distribution partner site:

- Submit monthly reports correctly and on time;
- Communicate program updates or distribution partner site needs and changes to Safe Riders as soon as possible (e.g., staff changes, referral changes, etc.);
- Attend mandatory Safe Riders meetings and trainings;
- Maintain a CSS inventory tracking system;
- Provide consistent education and distribution services every month; and
- Maintain at least two trained CPSTs on staff.

### External Review

Safe Riders may place distribution partner sites on external review for consistent issues including:

- Report delays;
- Inaccurate reports;
- Seats not distributed monthly;
- Seats not distributed correctly;
- No reports for two or more consecutive months;
- Unresponsive to three Safe Riders communication or meeting attempts;
- Not attending distribution partner site trainings;
- Seat inventory issues (e.g., missing or unaccounted seats); or
- No corrective action plan submitted to address non-compliance issues (i.e., loss of certified CPST).

Safe Riders will notify all points of contact via email of external review status. The external review period will end after the distribution partner site agrees to the terms and submits a corrective action plan for review. Safe Riders will email the distribution

partner site with permission to resume following the Safe Riders-approved corrective action plan review.

## **Dismissal from the Program**

Safe Riders may issue an immediate dismissal if a distribution partner site:

- Does not distribute CSSs appropriately according to a child’s age, weight, height, special health care need, manufacturer’s instructions, or program guidelines;
- Is unable to correct a reporting or inventory issue after three months; or
- Is unable to maintain at least two CPSTs on staff.

If dismissed, the distribution partner site is responsible for covering shipping costs to send the remaining CSS inventory to another distribution partner site or back to Safe Riders. The distribution partner site is responsible for replacing any unaccounted-for CSSs.

## Chapter 9: Liability and Forms

Many distribution partner site organizations express concern about being held liable if a child is injured while riding in an organization-provided CSS. Safe Riders distribution partner sites should consult their agency's legal representation to check that liability policies and procedures are in place. Neither DSHS nor Safe Riders assumes liability for distribution partner sites.

### CSS Agreement and Release of Liability Form

Before a distribution partner site provides a CSS to a family, staff should have the parent or caregiver sign a liability statement. If a distribution partner site is providing car-side education, the CPST must complete a checklist form that includes a liability statement signed by the caregiver. An example of a checklist form with a liability statement can be found on [Basecamp](#). If providing CPS education in the form of classroom education or virtual education, the distribution partner site must have the caregiver sign a liability form upon receiving a CSS. Safe Riders provides liability forms for distribution partner sites to use on [Basecamp](#). Distribution partner sites should **not** alter the forms. Only add information when prompted and applicable. Distribution partner sites should retain the forms (original or digital) for five years.

### Safe Riders Distribution Program Checklist

In addition to liability forms, there are additional distribution partner site precautions. The following checklist can help distribution partner sites provide services using best practices:

- Attend Safe Riders distribution program trainings to receive up-to-date recommendations;
- Examine each CSS thoroughly before giving it to a family. Each CSS should have all working parts and a manual;
- Allow only certified CPSTs to educate and assist parents with installing CSS;
- Disseminate up-to-date recommendations and educational materials and remove any outdated CPS materials from inventory and circulation;
- Refuse payment or donations for Safe Riders services or CSSs; and

- Destroy used CSSs the program replaces for the family. If the distribution partner site decides to keep any seats for training, Safe Riders recommends the distribution partner site mark the seat “for training only.”

## Chapter 10: Resources

Distribution partner sites should provide parents and caregivers with up-to-date national resources for additional guidance and instruct them to always follow vehicle and car seat manufacturer's instructions. Below are some helpful CPS resources:

- Safe Riders Basecamp Distribution Partner Folder  
[public.3.basecamp.com/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault](https://public.3.basecamp.com/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault)  
**NOTE:** Basecamp is an online platform where distribution partner sites can find the most updated forms, educational materials, toolkit resources, and reporting documentation available for download. See [Appendix D](#).
- Safe Kids Worldwide  
[safekids.org](https://safekids.org)
- National Child Passenger Safety Board  
[cpsboard.org/car-seat-safety/](https://cpsboard.org/car-seat-safety/)
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
[nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats](https://nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats)
- American Academy of Pediatrics  
[healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/on-the-go/Pages/Car-Safety-Seats-Information-for-Families.aspx](https://healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/on-the-go/Pages/Car-Safety-Seats-Information-for-Families.aspx)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Keep Child Passengers Safe  
[cdc.gov/injury/features/child-passenger-safety/index.html](https://cdc.gov/injury/features/child-passenger-safety/index.html)
- Instruction Manuals for Evenflo Child Safety Seats  
[evenflo.com/pages/instruction-manual](https://evenflo.com/pages/instruction-manual)

## Appendix A: Educational Training Outline

### Introduction to Child Passenger Safety (CPS) and Its Importance (15 mins)

- Child Passenger Safety Technician (CPST) educators and students introduce themselves.
- CPST educates on child safety seat (CSS) effectiveness to keep children safe while traveling in a vehicle.
- CPST uses up-to-date information and materials to share with families.

### The CPS Education and CSS Demonstration (30 mins)

#### For CSS Selection and Parts, CPST(s) should:

- Explain recommendations for CSS use at each stage for as long as possible – rear-facing, forward-facing, booster seat, and seat belt.
- Identify CSS parts and demonstrate how they function:
  - Recline adjustment
  - Harness strap adjuster
  - Harness clip
  - Belt path(s)
  - Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children (LATCH) system
- Explain the CSS height and weight limits to educate on when the child will outgrow the seat.
- Point out CSS manufacturer labels.
- Highlight common misuses by CSS type and in the selection, direction, location, installation, and harnessing of the seat.
- Share the Texas child passenger safety law.
- Explain pre-owned or expired CSS usage risks.
- Explain unsafe non-approved product use.
- Encourage seat belt use for everyone in the vehicle.

**For Direction, the CPST(s) should:**

- Emphasize the child should remain in each CSS stage for as long as possible, until reaching the highest height and weight limitation of each seat.
- Review CSS height and weight limitations being distributed, if applicable.
- Check the proper belt path for the direction the CSS is used.

**For Location, CPST(s) should:**

- Discuss CSS location and position with other passengers in mind.
- Provide air bag warnings and review where to find these in vehicles.
- Emphasize the back seat is the safest place for children to ride in a vehicle. All children ages 13 and younger should ride in the back seat.

**For CSS installation or seat belt fit, CPST(s) should:**

- Provide hands-on car side installation assistance in the family's vehicle.
- Discuss how to securely attach the CSS in a vehicle using the safety belt or LATCH system (refer to both the vehicle owner's manual and the CSS manual).
- Explain that proper installation should include less than one-inch of movement of the CSS at the belt path (front-to-back and side-to-side), and that the CSS is at the correct angle.
- Encourage parent and caregivers to look in the vehicle manual for CSS installation instructions for their vehicle.
- Discuss the dangers of leaving children unattended in vehicles.
- Emphasize **consistency** – use the CSS during every ride in the car, no matter how brief.

**For Harnessing or seat belt fit, CPST(s) should:**

- Demonstrate, with a child or doll, how to properly select harness slot for direction (rear-facing and forward-facing) and harness a child in the CSS with the harness system according to the seat and vehicle manual instructions.
- Observe the parent or caregiver as they practice harnessing with a child or doll.
- Demonstrate a snug fit by using the “pinch” test.
- Explain the danger of using bulky jackets.

- Explain proper seat belt placement over the body if using a booster seat or vehicle seat belt.

**Program Requirements (15 mins) – Information to Share with Attendees:**

- Registration card: Discuss the CSS registration card and its importance. Ask attendees to complete and mail out the card following the class or distribution partner site can mail out the completed card for the caregiver.
- Car seat instructions: Provide a CSS manual/instruction booklet to the family in the family’s appropriate language, if available.
- Label CSS: Mark on the CSS shell “**Not for sale**” before distributing to a family.
- Disposal of CSSs: CSSs that were involved in a crash, expired, recalled, or those replaced should be destroyed and disposed of according to the manufacturer’s instructions.
- Educational materials: Provide up-to-date educational materials and other helpful resources.
- Allow time for questions and answers.

## Appendix B: Child Safety Seats Specifications

### **Evenflo LiteMax – Rear Facing Only (RFO):**

- Height – 15.7-32 inches (in.)
- Weight – 3-35 pounds (lbs.)
- Only available for hospital-based programs.
- Only available post-partum for some hospital/clinic-based programs.
- See RFO Guidelines in Appendix D.

### **Evenflo Titan 65 – Convertible:**

- Rear-facing:
  - Height – 19-40 in.
  - Weight – 5-40 lbs.
- Forward-facing:
  - At least 2 years old.
  - Height – 28-54 in.
  - Weight – 22-65 lbs.
- LATCH weight limitations – The vehicle seat belt should be used for internal harness installations with children weighing more than 55 lbs.
- Available for all Safe Riders distribution site partners.

### **Evenflo Secure Kid – Combination:**

- Five-point harness:
  - Height – 28-50 in.
  - Weight – 22-65 lbs.
- Booster mode for children over age 4:
  - Height – 43-57 in.
  - Weight – 40-100 lbs.
- Available for all Safe Riders distribution site partners.

### **Evenflo GoTime Booster:**

- Height – 44-57 in.
- Weight – 40-120 lbs.
- Child must be over age 4 to use CSS.
- Available for all Safe Riders distribution site partners.

## **Appendix C: Safe Riders Toolkit**

The Safe Riders toolkit of resources is available on the Resources and Material tab on the Safe Riders website – [dshs.texas.gov/injury-prevention/safe-riders/safe-riders-resources](https://dshs.texas.gov/injury-prevention/safe-riders/safe-riders-resources).

### **Distribution Partner Highlight Video:**

[Safe Riders Child Passenger Safety | Texas DSHS](#)

### **Distribution Partner Site Location Map:**

[Texas Safe Riders Car Seat Distribution Site Locations](#)

### **Pediatric Vehicular Heatstroke Information and Resources:**

[Pediatric Vehicular Heatstroke Dangers in Texas | Texas DSHS](#)

### **Upcoming Texas CPS Webinars:**

[Resources for Child Passenger Safety Technicians | Texas DSHS](#)

### **Recertification Steps:**

[Resources for Child Passenger Safety Technicians | Texas DSHS](#)

## Appendix D: Basecamp Resource Website

### Basecamp

[public.3.basecamp.com/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault](https://public.3.basecamp.com/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault)

### Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) CPS videos – (Appendix C)

[3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/6710384966](https://3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/6710384966)

### Safe Riders Promotional Materials

[3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/6710173225](https://3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/6710173225)

### General CPS Education slide deck (Spanish)

[3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/7599358065](https://3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/7599358065)

### General CPS Education slide deck (English)

[3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/7599362619](https://3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/7599362619)

### Safe Riders Car Seat Request Form

[3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/6710106236](https://3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/6710106236)

### Distribution Partner Update Link

[3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/7304683026](https://3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/7304683026)

### Safe Riders RFO CSS Distribution Guidelines

[3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/7305081901](https://3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/7305081901)

### Safe Riders CSS Checklist Form (English)

[3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/6710149217](https://3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/6710149217)

### Safe Riders CSS Checklist Form (Spanish)

[3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/6710149266](https://3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/6710149266)

### Safe Riders Child Restraint Agreement Release of Liability (English)

[3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/6710106343](https://3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/6710106343)

### Safe Riders Child Restraint Agreement Release of Liability (Spanish)

[3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/6710106283](https://3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/6710106283)

### In-Kind Form

[3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/7304632523](https://3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/7304632523)

### DSHS Model Photo Release (English)

[3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/6710149007](https://3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/6710149007)

### DSHS Model Photo Release (Spanish)

[3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/6710149061](https://3.basecamp.com/3987562/p/bHHGcm2aiGn9ekKVy4GJxyGQ/vault/6710149061)

## References and Guidance

### Resources for Correct Use

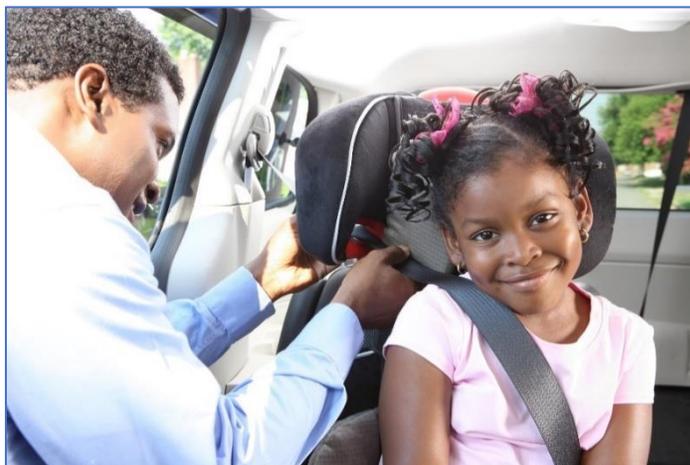
Caregivers should reference child safety seat instructions, the vehicle owner's manual, and the resources listed below for guidance.

**American Academy of Pediatrics**  
800-433-9016, [aap.org](https://www.aap.org)

**Safe Riders / Texas Department of State Health Services**  
800-252-8255, [dshs.texas.gov/injury-prevention/safe-riders](https://dshs.texas.gov/injury-prevention/safe-riders)

**Evenflo**  
800-233-5921, [evenflo.com](https://www.evenflo.com)

**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)**  
800-424-9393, [nhtsa.gov](https://www.nhtsa.gov)



**National Child Passenger Safety Certification Program**  
877-36-8154, [cert.safekids.org](https://www.cert.safekids.org)

**Attend a Child Safety Seat Checkup Event in Your Area**  
866-SEAT-CHECK, [seatcheck.org](https://seatcheck.org)  
[safekids.org](https://safekids.org)  
[dshs.texas.gov/injury-prevention/safe-riders/child-safety-seat-calendar](https://dshs.texas.gov/injury-prevention/safe-riders/child-safety-seat-calendar)

### Contact Information

If you have any questions, contact Safe Riders at [safiriders@dshs.texas.gov](mailto:safiriders@dshs.texas.gov).

Safe Riders Distribution Program

***[dshs.texas.gov/injury-  
prevention/safe-riders](https://dshs.texas.gov/injury-prevention/safe-riders)***