

Document: Tenn. Code Ann. § 55-10-425

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TN - Tennessee Code Annotated **Title 55 Motor and Other Vehicles** **Chapter 10 Accidents, Crimes and Penalties** **Part 4 Alcohol and Drug Related Offenses**

55-10-425. Compliance-based removal of ignition interlock device. [Effective until January 1, 2023. See version effective on January 1, 2023, and see Compiler's Notes.]

(a) Effective July 1, 2016, the authorized removal of any functioning ignition interlock device that is required by the department of safety pursuant to § 55-10-417(k) or by court order, whether issued due to statutory requirement, in the court's discretion, or at the defendant's request, shall be compliance-based in accordance with this section.

(b)

(1) Except as provided in subdivision (b)(2), upon application by a person who is not otherwise prohibited from having a restricted license, the court shall order the installation and use of a functioning ignition interlock device for a three-hundred-sixty-five-consecutive-day period or for the entire period of the person's driver license revocation, whichever is longer. The consecutive day requirement shall commence on the date of the ignition interlock installation. For persons who are required to use ignition interlock upon reinstatement pursuant to § 55-10-417(k), the six-month period shall commence on the date of license reinstatement, and shall, for the purposes of authorizing removal of the interlock device, be considered the same as the three hundred sixty-five consecutive day requirement.

(2) If a functioning ignition interlock device is required, ordered, or requested to be installed and used pursuant to subsection (a), the minimum three-hundred-sixty-five-consecutive-day period required by subdivision (b)(1) and the final one-hundred-twenty-day period of violation-free use required by subdivision (c)(2) are applicable regardless of whether the person applies for a restricted license. If the person elects not to operate a motor vehicle during the period of license revocation and applies for reinstatement of the license at the end of the revocation period, the department shall not reinstate the

license until the person shows the department proof of ignition interlock installation. Upon proof being shown and the driver license reinstated, the three hundred sixty-five (365) consecutive days of usage period shall commence on the date the license is reinstated.

(3) If the court determines that installation and use of a functioning ignition interlock device is not required by § 55-10-409(b)(2)(B), the court shall make specific findings of fact on a form provided by the department that the factors listed in § 55-10-409(b)(2)(B) do not exist in the instant case. The findings of fact shall include the following:

(A) The person's actual blood or breath alcohol concentration (BAC) demonstrating that the person did not have a blood or breath alcohol concentration of eight-hundredths of one percent (0.08%) or higher, or a combination of alcohol in any amount and marijuana, a controlled substance, controlled substance analogue, drug, or any substance affecting the central nervous system;

(B) There was no person in the vehicle with the person who was under eighteen (18) years of age;

(C) The person was not involved in an accident, or the accident did not require a report under § 55-10-107, or the accident was not the proximate result of the person's intoxication; and

(D) The person is not charged with violating the implied consent law or, if the person is so charged, the person did not have a conviction or juvenile delinquency adjudication for a violation that occurred within five (5) years of the instant implied consent violation, for any of the offenses set out in § 55-10-409(b)(2)(B)(iv).

(4)

(A) If the court fails to make a specific finding that § 55-10-409(b)(2)(B) is not applicable in the instant case, if the finding made by the court is incomplete, or if the finding does not contain adequate information for the department to determine the applicability of § 55-10-409(b)(2)(B), the person shall be required by default to install and use a functioning ignition interlock device for a three hundred sixty-five consecutive day period or for the entire period of the driver license revocation period, whichever is longer.

(B) If the court orders that a restricted license be issued without an ignition interlock device required, and the court's findings of fact demonstrate that installation and use of a functioning ignition interlock device is not required by § 55-10-409(b)(2)(B), the restricted driver license shall be subject to the geographic restrictions of § 55-10-409(c).

(c)

(1) A person required to install and use only a functioning ignition interlock device pursuant to this section is prohibited from removing or causing to be removed the ignition interlock device from the vehicle for which it was ordered and the person shall be required to maintain the device in working order for a three-hundred-sixty-five-consecutive-day period or for the entire period of the driver license revocation period, whichever is longer.

(2) In addition to the minimum three-hundred-sixty-five-consecutive-day period during which the ignition interlock device shall be attached, functioning, and maintained on the motor vehicle for which it is ordered, the ignition interlock device cannot be lawfully removed from the vehicle, except for necessary maintenance, replacement, or repair as determined by the department, unless the person has

operated the ignition interlock equipped vehicle without violation, as described in subsection (d), for the last one hundred twenty (120) days of the period for which it is required.

(d)

(1) During the final one-hundred-twenty-day period for which the ignition interlock device is required, the person shall not violate any of the following conditions:

(A) Tampering with, circumventing, or attempting to start the vehicle with a breath alcohol concentration in excess of the two-hundredths of one percent (0.02%) blood alcohol concentration calibration setting required by § 55-10-417(b); provided, however, that a person shall not be in violation of this subdivision (d)(1)(A) for attempting to start the vehicle, if a subsequent retest within ten (10) minutes shows a breath alcohol concentration of two-hundredths of one percent (0.02%) or less and review of the digital images associated with each test confirms that the same person performed both tests;

(B) Failing to take or skipping a rolling retest when required by the ignition interlock device; provided, however, that a person shall not be in violation of this subdivision (d)(1)(B) for failing to take or skipping a rolling retest if a review of the digital images associated with the test confirms that the vehicle was not occupied by the driver at the time of the retest;

(C) Failing a rolling test required by the ignition interlock device with a breath alcohol concentration in excess of two-hundredths of one percent (0.02%); provided, however, that a person shall not be in violation of this subdivision (d)(1)(C) for failing a rolling test, if a subsequent retest within ten (10) minutes shows a breath alcohol concentration of two-hundredths of one percent (0.02%) or less and review of the digital images associated with each test confirms that the same person performed both tests;

(D) Removing or causing to be removed the ignition interlock device at any time during the three hundred sixty-five consecutive day period; and

(E) Failing to appear at the ignition interlock device provider when required for calibration, monitoring, or inspection of the device.

(2)

(A) Upon completion of the period for which the person is required to use an ignition interlock device, the person shall request that the ignition interlock provider certify that the person has complied with the conditions in subdivision (d)(1) for the required periods. The provider shall determine whether the person has been compliant with the conditions for the required periods and either issue a certificate of compliance to the person or notify the person of noncompliance and the resulting extension of the ignition interlock requirement.

(B) If the ignition interlock provider issues a certificate of compliance, the person may present the certificate to the department of safety, which shall remove the ignition interlock restrictions from the person's driver license.

(C) If the ignition interlock provider notifies the person that the provider's records indicate the person has not complied with the conditions in subdivision (d)(1) during the required periods, the person may either accept the extension of the ignition interlock requirement or request that the provider reconsider the finding of noncompliance, which may be based on evidence of compliance provided by the person. If

the provider confirms the finding of noncompliance, the person may either accept the extension of the ignition interlock requirement or request an administrative compliance review by the department, pursuant to subdivision (d)(2)(D).

(D) A person may request, in writing, an administrative compliance review by the department, and the person shall include in the request any evidence of compliance. The department shall review any evidence provided by the person and the records provided by the provider within thirty (30) days of receiving the request and shall notify the person and the provider of the department's determination by mail. If the department determines that the person has been compliant for the required periods, the provider shall issue a certificate of compliance to the person. If the department determines that the person was not in compliance for the required periods, the person may seek judicial review of the department's administrative compliance review determination as provided by § 4-5-322.

(e)

(1) If at any time during the three-hundred-sixty-five-consecutive-day period, the department determines that the person removes or causes to be removed the ignition interlock device, the device shall be reinstalled and the three-hundred-sixty-five-consecutive-day period shall start again from the date of the reinstallation.

(2) If at any time during the final one hundred twenty (120) days of the time period the person is required to use a functioning ignition interlock device, the department determines that the person has committed a violation of subsection (d), the one hundred twenty day period shall start again from the date of the violation.

(f)

(1) If the person has successfully completed the three-hundred-sixty-five-consecutive-day period the ignition interlock device is required to be installed on the motor vehicle, and the final one hundred twenty day period was completed without violation, the person shall take the vehicle to a certified ignition interlock provider for a final download of the offender's data file and shall send the data file to the department.

(2) If the data file from the final download and other relevant information shows that the person has been ignition interlock compliant for the requisite periods of time, the department shall inform the person on a compliance form developed by the department that the person may apply for driver license reinstatement and that the ignition interlock device may be lawfully removed. The person may take the form to the installing ignition interlock service provider for removal.

(3) The person may take the compliance form to the department and apply for reinstatement of the person's driver license. If the person meets all requirements for license reinstatement and pays all reinstatement fees, the department shall reinstate the driver license.

(4) When removing an ignition interlock device on or after July 1, 2016, a certified ignition interlock provider may in good faith rely on a person's compliance form that removal of the ignition interlock device is lawful.

(g) This section applies to offenses committed on or after July 1, 2016, for which a person is required by a court order, a statutory requirement, in the court's discretion, or at the defendant's request, to operate

only a motor vehicle that is equipped with a functioning ignition interlock device. To the extent not inconsistent with this section, the procedural provisions and geographic restrictions of §§ 55-10-409 and 55-10-417, the provider fees of § 55-10-418, and the electronic monitoring indigency fund and indigency provisions of § 55-10-419 must, if applicable, continue to apply. If any provision of those sections is in conflict with this section, this section must apply.

(h)

(1) This subsection (h) applies to persons required to have an ignition interlock device installed on their vehicle under subsection (c) when that vehicle is unable to be operated due to:

(A) Damage from an accident or other uncontrollable circumstance where the person's intoxication was not a proximate cause; or

(B) Repairs based on normal wear and tear of a vehicle or due to a recall.

(2) A person whose vehicle is unable to be operated under subdivision (h)(1) may request the department toll the required consecutive three-hundred-sixty-five-day period, beginning on the date of the incident that led to the vehicle being unable to be operated, by submitting proof to the ignition interlock provider that the vehicle was involved in a traffic crash, the vehicle is being repaired, or other uncontrollable circumstance through no fault of the person required to have ignition interlock.

(3)

(A) If the vehicle was in an accident and a law enforcement agency issued a crash report, the crash report must be submitted.

(B) Other proof may consist of, but is not limited to:

(i) A written statement from the insurance company regarding repairs;

(ii) A written statement from a repair shop showing the damage being repaired and the estimated time of completion for repairs; or

(iii) Other documentation acceptable to the department.

(4) The ignition interlock provider shall forward the request and documentation to the department within five (5) business days of receipt.

(5) The department shall notify the person and the ignition interlock provider in writing, or by electronic transmission, if the tolling period has been granted or denied, and, if denied, the reason for the denial.

(6) If granted, a toll period shall be for thirty (30) days. At the end of the thirty-day period, if the vehicle is still unable to be operated and the person cannot have an ignition interlock device installed on a different vehicle, the person shall submit additional proof, as specified in subdivision (h)(3), to the department showing the vehicle is still undergoing repairs or other acceptable reason that the ignition interlock device cannot be installed on a different vehicle. The department shall notify the person and the ignition interlock provider in writing, or by electronic transmission, if any additional toll period has been granted or denied, and, if denied, the reason for the denial.

(7) At the end of any thirty-day period, if no new request has been submitted and granted, then the three-hundred-sixty-five-day period shall resume with the person being required to maintain an ignition interlock device for the period of time that was remaining on the day the tolling period began.

(8) The tolling period in this subsection (h) does not relieve a person from the requirement to only operate a vehicle that is equipped with an ignition interlock device.

(9)

(A) A person aggrieved by the denial of their request to have the three-hundred-sixty-five-day period tolled under this subsection (h) may, within ten (10) business days of the date of the denial, request a review by the commissioner or the commissioner's designee. The request for review shall include copies of the proof submitted to the department, the denial letter from the department, and any information showing why the person believes the denial was incorrect.

(B) The commissioner or the commissioner's designee shall, within ten (10) business days of receiving the request for review, make a determination in writing, based on information in the department's records and the information provided by the person requesting the review, whether or not the thirty-day toll period should be granted.

(C) The request for review will stay the continuation of the three-hundred-sixty-five-day period until the commissioner or commissioner's designee's ruling is issued.

(D) A person may appeal the commissioner or commissioner's designee's ruling pursuant to § 4-5-322.

(i)

(1) If a person is unable to produce enough breath volume to operate an ignition interlock device, then the person may apply to the department for a waiver of the ignition interlock requirement.

(2) An application for a waiver must be on a form developed by the department, and the following documents must be submitted with the application:

(A) A statement by an ignition interlock provider, dated within sixty (60) days of the application, that an ignition interlock device cannot be adjusted to allow the person to use the device and register the person's breath alcohol level; and

(B) Statements from at least two (2) licensed physicians who have examined the person at an in-office appointment, dated within sixty (60) days of the application, indicating that the person has a medical condition that renders the person unable to provide a deep lung breath sample for analysis by an ignition interlock device.

(3) A person who fails to submit the documents required in subdivision (i)(2) at the time of application must be provided an additional thirty (30) days to submit the documents before the department may deny the waiver for the failure to submit the required documents.

(4) Within sixty (60) days after receipt of a waiver application and all required documents, the department shall review the application and the statements from the interlock provider and the physicians, and determine if a person is unable to operate an ignition interlock device and the failure to grant an interlock waiver would constitute a hardship based on the person's work or medical needs.

(5) Upon determining that a person is unable to operate an ignition interlock device and the failure to grant a waiver would constitute a hardship under subdivision (i)(4), the department may issue a waiver of the person's ignition interlock requirement. The waiver form issued by the department must specify the necessary times and places of permissible operation of a motor vehicle for the limited purposes of going to and from:

(A) Work at the person's regular place of employment;

(B) The office of the person's probation officer or other similar location for the sole purpose of attending a regularly scheduled meeting or other function with the probation officer by a route to be designated by the probation officer;

(C) A court-ordered alcohol safety program;

(D) A college or university in the case of a student enrolled full time in the college or university;

(E) A court-ordered outpatient alcohol and drug treatment program;

(F) The person's regular place of worship for regularly scheduled religious services conducted by a bona fide religious institution as defined in § 48-101-502(c); and

(G) Medical treatment of the person or an immediate family member or provision of care for the person or an immediate family member suffering from a serious illness.

(6)

(A) The time and geographic restrictions must be required for the entire period of license revocation, or the entire period an ignition interlock device was required based on the law at the time of the person's conviction.

(B) A person who receives a waiver must carry the waiver form at all times while the person is operating a motor vehicle. A person who does not have the waiver form while operating a motor vehicle is considered to be driving on a revoked license.

(7) A person who has been granted a waiver form by the department must take the form, accompanied by a fee of sixty-five dollars (\$65.00), to a driver services center to apply for a restricted driver license.

(8) The denial of a waiver under this subsection (i) may be appealed in accordance with the rules and procedures for appeals through the department's driver improvement division. The department shall not issue a license without an ignition interlock restriction during the pendency of the appeal.

(j)

(1) A nonresident, as defined in § 55-50-102, who is required to install and maintain an ignition interlock device pursuant to this part may request a waiver developed by the department to be completed by the nonresident's home state. Upon acceptance of the completed waiver by the department, the ignition interlock installation requirement must be waived.

(2) If at any time the nonresident becomes a resident, as defined in § 55-50-102, of this state, then the resident must comply with the requirements of this section and the ignition interlock usage period will commence on the date of driver license issuance with proof that an ignition interlock device has been installed on the motor vehicle.

(k) A person required to have a functioning ignition interlock device pursuant to this part shall not operate a motor vehicle without a functioning ignition interlock device.

(I) A person who is subject to § 55-10-409 or this section may petition a court with proper jurisdiction for reinstatement of the person's driver license under this part regardless of the date when the person first became subject to those limitations. If the person is in compliance with all other requirements for reinstatement and has no other revocations or suspensions on the person's driving record, then the court may order reinstatement. Upon receipt of the court order, if the person is in compliance with all other requirements for reinstatement and has no other revocations or suspensions on the person's driving record, then the department shall reinstate the license.

History

Acts 2016, ch. 888, § 1; 2018, ch. 577, § 3; 2018, ch. 1046, § 4; 2022, ch. 964, §§ 19-23.

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